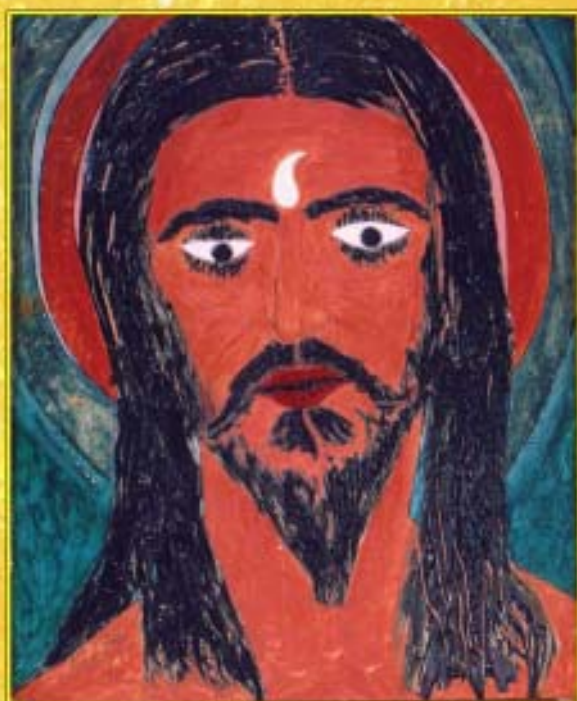


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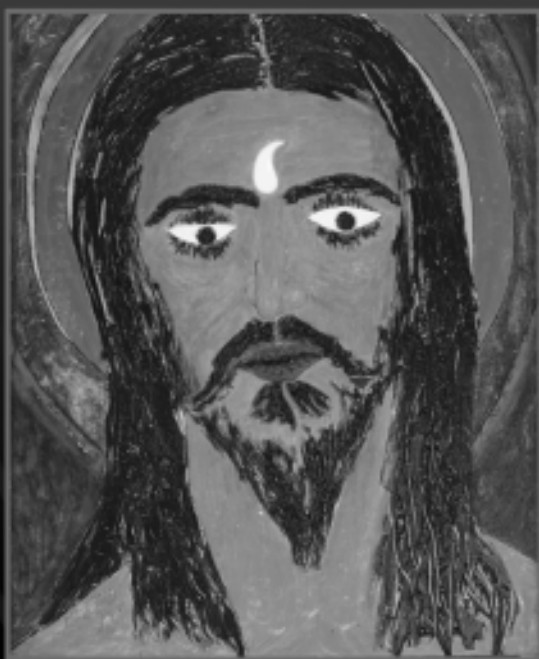
**PORTRAIT OF THE CHRIST
WITH A BINDHI**



K.G.SASI

dedicated to all those who have stood for the cause of liberty

THE
BOOK
ON THE
**PORTRAIT OF THE CHRIST
WITH A BINDHI**



K.G.SASI

THE BOOK ON THE PORTRAIT OF THE CHRIST WITH A BINDHI

A loose script in English

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Inspired by the painting “Portrait of Christ with a Bindhi” by Artist Joshe

Illustrated by Damodaran Nambidi

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A PREFACE TO THE BINDHI

My first biblical one act play “Regum dei” received an all Kerala third prize in the eighties when staged in a competition conducted by the Catholic Bishops Conference. But I felt disappointed when I saw the director in his treatment of the visualization neglecting the importance of the “one earth one heaven” concept of Isaiah. Out of my staged thirty plays twelve had biblical themes. Though my efforts to identify a liberal Indian Son of man were greatly appreciated, importance of the theological aspects always attained better comments. As a law abiding citizen of India I always had an affinity towards the secular concept. But a more secular and liberal son of man with human weaknesses however were also viewed suspiciously as an attempt to undermine the power of the priestly class. A hungry or crying Christ was often criticized with disbelief. All such reactions, I could conceive, were the result of hypocrisy in faith.

The first book apart from my school texts I read was the Pentateuch that I had borrowed from the mother of my best friend. It was a season of famine and we were partially starving at that time. That lady who thought that the little nonbeliever boy who had an interest in the holy book should properly be fed, ensured my supplementary nourishments with tapioca and other common roots. So I loved the book intensely. Soon I got a personal copy of New Testament every line of which I practically underlined with the curiosity of a child and the criticism of a boy. I wondered why the apostles wanted to divide people into groups who supported them and who opposed them. To tell the truth before attaining my majority Christ became one of my topics of learning. I soon got dissatisfied with the

four gospels that always emphasized on the teachings and wonders of son of man neglecting and mystifying his life. So I decided to search for further details of his life and reactions.

Though there are mentions of the persons who loved him and whom he loved, Christ is not recorded as a friend of a particular person. But his stories (I know that they are popularly but wrongly classified as parables) reveal him as a person who has gone deep through intimate friendly affection. I could see his dynamic life performing a cosmic dance only within those hundreds of stories told by him. When I told the idea to a friend he said jokingly, “Then do a research on his stories for they are endless.” But the joke turned itself into reality when I could get copies of Gnostic and other works related to Son of man. More than a dozen gospels acts Koran Bhavishyapurana the writings of the Jewish historians and the works of some later Christological authors provided me with sufficient data to work on. I had to reject some works like the Aquarian Age Gospel of Jesus, the Christ of the Piscean Age by Levi H. Dowling because of their lack of minimum authenticity purpose and claims. All my efforts to go through the stories at that time were aimless other than personal pleasure and my perception found expression only in my one act plays and friendly talks.

Things suddenly changed when I saw the painting “Portrait of Christ with a Bindhi” by my intimate friend Artist Joshe. The precious painting revealed a very predominant Indian Christ. I have witnessed numerous superfluous efforts in India even from the part of Churches for the Indianization of Christ. But the revolution offered by this painting was true spiritual. (Let me acknowledge that I have been labeled nonspiritual at many times by deeply pious learned friends because of my emphasis during friendly talks on bringing spirituality into the ground realities of the world that they renounce.) Joshe also had a plan to do a film on his Christ at Himalayan locations.

He was thrilled with his mind filled full with the artistic intuitions of the Christ which he has realized. And I would dare say that his life itself is his creative masterpiece. So he organized a meeting of his friends and well wishers at Gayathri Asramam of Chalakudy. The meeting was presided over by Swami Sachidananda and I was one among the invited. I presented there in brief the necessity of spiritual free expression and briefed my perceptions on Son of man. According to me whatever stories he has told is based on his own true experience and there is very high probability for him to be a character under thirty years age in each of such stories. I observed further that the social religious and political backgrounds of each story if properly classified and analyzed would tell about the whereabouts of Son of man during his unknown years. Swami Sachidanada remarked that I might take up the research work myself. I wonder why I have consented because I usually do not take up large literary works except knowledge literature. It took three years to complete the work.

After identification and classification of the stories I discarded the incomplete and part versions as available from my sources and selected only the best description. Hence many of the stories in the popular four gospels were substituted by their better equivalents in Gnostic and other works. To my astonishment the New Testament was found to be having relatively less descriptive and narrative qualities and very often missed many important so called parables.

However I could identify one hundred and thirty five stories which had specific references to their social religious and political backgrounds. I marked the possible venues of the occurrence of such stories around BC and AD first centuries in a world map. A route from Alexandria to Manasasarovara through Musiris was the shortest possible route obtained there from. After confining the route my next effort was to identify similar characters in the stories. I ruled

out remote resemblances but insisted absolute similarity. The result was around one hundred and fifty characters that have independent stories. The next herculean task was to identify the historical persons appearing within the stories. The representatives of various Indian philosophical systems were also incorporated to the premises for a comprehensive appreciation of the situation of the region where the stories take place as it is undoubtedly clear that Son of man has taken every effort to tell these stories in a Jewish background. Hence I finalized the entire scheme with one hundred and seventy five characters.

The next difficulty was to identify a form of literature for expression. No drama with such profound requirements can be staged. The next form in consideration was a screen play. But to tell the complete story it needs at least six hours which is not a fashion at all these days. Hence I invented a new form which I call loose script (Well. I know that there are stuffs others call loose scripts as well.) incorporating the modern system of division by scenes and the ancient oriental tale telling method using visuals by words and dialogues.

The process of writing made me nomadic. I have written very few scenes at my home. Sleepless nights after my office hours could not also offer much. Then I decided to travel and spent a few days in a small seashore city in Tamil Nadu. I could achieve great momentum in my work there but became helpless on the topic whether a spiritually developed person could ever lose his spirituality at all and if yes how. I got the answer when I was commenting on the beatitudes at the banks of Siruvani, a holy river near the abode of the aboriginal people.

The result is the book before you. You are the judges and as the book says you shall also be judged by this humble endeavor.



SCENE 1 Alexandria, AD 17 May 18

*Venue Branch of a buddhist monastery established
 under orders of the great indian king asoka.*

*The mediterranean waves of the middle east.
The bright blue skies are mystical.
An albatross with its great wings expanded
flies towards the shore.
The town is revealed in all its glory and ruins.
The bird finally rests on a big buddhist
monastery which reveals an indo greek
influence in construction.
The bird is no more there but the monastery
building is there.*

*Typical buddhist drum beats sound.
The door to the inner teaching campus opens.
Chief priest and his train assemble in the
courtyard.
It is the starting of an announcement.*

Announcer Sound of Wilderness.... The best student in hebrew studies.

*A young man around twenty four with superb
physical qualities and deep blue romantic
eyes moves steadily and confidently to bow
before chief priest.*

Announcer Son of man.... The best student in indian studies.

*A young man around twenty three with a
medium shaped body and dark black
confused eyes moves forward as if in a dream
to bow before chief priest and all his train.
Chief priest addresses sound of wilderness
in a pleasant mood.
He is erect and stubborn.*

Chief Priest Sound of wilderness, this staff shall be your medal.

*Chief priest gives away the prize to the
youngster who receives it with great respect
and pride.*

Chief Priest This staff shall reveal your power. How do you

plan to make it useful?

Sound of Wilderness I plan to do my higher studies in damascus. I have learned my basics from mount parwan and here. After three years, I shall return from damascus to reclaim this staff to lead my people into the kingdom of heaven.

Chief Priest What will you teach your people?

Sound of Wilderness Of repentance shall I speak and no more. I was named sound of wilderness at mount parwan when I was two and twenty. I shall make the way of the one following me alright and will withdraw from this world to my peace when he comes. He will surpass all our ancestral prophets.

Chief Priest Son of man, for your outstanding performance, you are presented with a bottle of anointment oil. You may anoint a sacred, powerful or enlightened person with this oil at the time of his incarnation. But remember that such great men take birth only once in a while and of course only when time is ripe. Take care never to lose your gift.

Son of man receives the present humbly.

Chief Priest Disciple, how do you plan to make use of this precious oil?

Son of man I am an orphan and until this day I have been under your instruction. Kindly tell me where I can find a person worthy for this sacred oil?

Chief Priest At manasarovara of the great himalayan mountains, exactly four years hereafter, you will find a living being on the full moon night of the enlightened one. If you are ready, you may leave for india in an indian vessel leaving egypt after three days through a secret route. The captain of the ship is a friendly indian scholar.

*Son of man smiles beautifully.
Sound of wilderness smiles too.
They are moving out.*

SCENE 2

Venue *Garden of the monastery from where three roads diverge.*

*Sound of wilderness and son of man walk together with all their possessions.
They have reached the junction from where they have to diverge.*

Son of man Brother, you have the luck to go back to our promised land. Ever since I am born there has always been a sword after me. Many innocent and poor boys got killed on my behalf.

Sound of Wilderness Friend, swords cannot threaten us. We are the hopes of our people. I have always hoped to work with you in our homeland.

Son of man Me too. I have always wanted to become one of your disciples.

**Sound of
Wilderness** I have dreamed that you are the one to follow me.

They laugh.

A boy under twelve years comes running and shouts.

Boy Stop there, stop there.

**Sound of
Wilderness** It is the naughty hippalus of greece.

Boy Son of man, tell me the secret route.

Son of man It is a red sea aden musiris route.

Boy But a few men cannot ship you there.

Son of man The winds will take care of it.

Boy Wretched men! I would have discovered that.

The boy runs and shouts again.

The two friends embrace each other and depart in their different directions.

They are still speaking loud.

Son of man Inform me when you start your work. I shall come to you.

**Sound of
Wilderness** I can only come to you in your dreams. India is a country far away.

Son of man But very near to our heart.



SCENE 3 The Sea, AD 17 May 27

Venue The african side of the great indian ocean.

Still surface of the deep blue sea.

The colourful horizon.

White clouds in the blue sky.

A vessel with mast in the ocean.

The shipmast and a flag on it with a fish in white cloth.

Son of man rests on the deck looking at the sky for a change of weather.

*A little away from him captain sits and recites
a sanskrit stanza.*

*The ship mast and the flag reveal that the
ship is carried away by the wings of the wind.
Captain is chanting his favourite stanza.*

Captain Just as a gale pushes away
A ship on the waters, the mind
That yields to the roving senses
Carries away his discrimination.

Son of man is listening and appreciating.

Son of man A very beautiful piece of verse.

Captain Do you know sanskrit?

Son of man I have learnt a little.

Captain Have you read gita?

Son of man Not yet. But I have heard about this book. Doesn't
it have five chapters?

Captain No. It has eight chapters already. May be a lot more
in a few decades.

*Captain, son of man, the ship, the sea, the
horizon and the sky.*

*The sky is full of monsoon clouds as big as
elephants, whales and a lot more.*

It rains and darkness covers everything.



SCENE 4 Musiris, AD 17 August 03

Venue Sea near musiris, the harbour city of india.

It is sun rise.

But the sky is still covered with blackness.

The vessel is moving towards east.

*It is raining and water is pouring from the
deck to the sea.*

*Captain and the crew are a happy lot and
they dance in the rain because they have
found the eastern land.*

The shores of musiris are open before them.

*A harbour with indians from all territories,
chinese, greeks, arabians, and africans.*

*Of course with plenty of mercantile goods
too.*

There is a sign board in the ancient tamil scripture reading “welcome to the land of golden peace.”

Beyond the sign board the path to the great bazaar of musiris.

Far away the vessel is seen anchored.

Passengers, crew, merchants and porters crowd around it.

A man of thirty five named narmudi in typical kerala costume approaches captain and son of man who stand a little away from the crowd.

Narmudi Welcome to the land of golden peace.

Son of man Let it be so for ever.

Captain Welcome, master narmudi. There is a message to you from alexandria.

Captain hands over a message to narmudi.

Captain You are directed to take care of this young foreigner and educate him on our culture and sciences. Son of man is a wonderful personality and even knows some of our languages.

Narmudi Friend, give me your hand. Farewell, captain.

Narmudi and son of man walk together hand in hand as if in a long lasting friendship.

Narmudi Your hands seem peculiar. They must be healing hands.

SCENE 5

Venue *The far end of a musiris market.*

Huge coconut leaf roofed buildings with stock of pepper, elephant tusks, clothes etc. On the road side there is a crowd of ascetic beggars who chant “give me alms.”

One of the beggars pulls off the shoulder cloth of son of man for which he offers no resistance but smiles instead.

Narmudi turns to see a long roman cloth in the hands of the ascetics.

SCENE 6

Venue *A paddy field and a house near it.*

A paddy field near a house.

It is dusk time.

Workers water the field with simple instruments.

Some people move with coconut leaf torches.

Narmudi and son of man cross this field and enter into the courtyard of the house.

A lady lights the evening lamp of the house with seven flames.

The passers by see the lamp and its flames.

As the young men enter the sit out of the house they are offered water to wash their legs and they do so.

They are welcomed by the head of family too.

Head of family Come. Come and sit.

When they sit, the lady puts out the flames in the lamp.

Narmudi Why did you put out all the flames?

Lady As both of you have entered this home, we don't have time to entertain any other guest. There is no need of evening lamp any more today. Come in and rest for the night.

She goes inside with the lamp followed by the head of the family.

It is night outside.

SCENE 7

Venue *A room of the house*

Son of man sleeps near an open window through which a lamp is seen outside, then two, three and so on.

The lamps reveal a typical pit arena where the worship of good earth and the salutation to the sun are performed.

*Practice of the martial arts takes place next.
The sleep of son of man is interrupted by the
clinking of weapons.
He wakes up and follows the sound to find
narmudi practicing with swords.
Son of man also takes a sword and starts
practicing with no opponent against him.
His style is different and others watch him.
Narmudi stops him.*

Narmudi You have healing hands. You can save many from death and suffering. We are people who live by swords and die by swords. Wait for a few minutes and I shall lead you where you can feel homely.

Narmudi practices again.

SCENE 8

Venue *A medical centre in a block of buildings.*

*Visuals reveal treatments according to the
marmani and panchakarma medicinal
systems.
Narmudi and son of man pass through many
blocks and finally reach the touch healing
section where a very old physician examines
the pulses of patients for diagnosis.
They approach the senior physician.*

Narmudi Master, we have a guest from the monastery of

alexandria established by the one beloved by the gods.

Physician Be famous, my son. What are your future plans?

Son of man I am on my way to the himalayas. Except for that I have evolved no plan.

Physician Very good. You shall learn more.

Son of man I hope so.

Physician Then you are welcome here for some days. Narmudi, give word to satyaputra on the arrival of an honourable guest and also gather information on jeevabindu. Jeevabindu of satyaputra will be a perfect match for this young man.

SCENE 9

Venue *The touch healing centre.*

Son of man learns lessons on the touch healing therapy from senior physician. There are many patients suffering from different diseases treated in the centre.

Physician There are seven important centres of vital power. If these power centres are properly charged a physician may exchange this power to another person for healing through a touch of hand, leg, chest or any other sensitive organ. Meditation will help a lot to assimilate vital energy.

SCENE 10

Venue *A serpent grove.*

It is dawn.

The serpent grove is fully lit with a hundred and one oil lamps.

Son of man is sitting there in meditation.

A beautiful cobra with its fully expanded hood is accompanied by its friends.

Narmudi and senior physician arrive on two beautiful horses.

Narmudi He is meditating there.

Senior physician dismounts from the horse.

Physician Son of man.....

Son of man arises from meditation.

Physician Come, my son, it is time for you to start your expedition. You are going to satyaputra. You may use my horse.

Son of man As you will, master.

Son of man mounts on the horse.

Narmudi and son of man ride towards east with the morning sun in front of them.

Forests and waterfalls as well as habitations are passed by them.



SCENE 11 Satyaputhra, AD 17 November 15

Venue *A medium farm house.*

A farmer around fifty years is seated in an arm chair in the shades of a big mango tree. Narmudi and his friend arrive on horses. Narmudi hands over the message of senior physician to the farmer. He reads it.

Farmer Tell the master that I obey his orders. The boys shall be put together to look after the herd. Rest for the day. Son of man, I know that you have only very few days to spend here. Tomorrow itself you will be sent to the forest.

SCENE 12

Venue *A hilly grazing land near a forest.*

A herd of one hundred sheep is lead by three men namely a shepherd, son of man and jeevabindu.

The first two persons hold spears in their hands.

Jeevabindu is reading a book.

A little lamb and her mother follow him.

Son of man becomes curious and he shouts.

Son of man Jeevabindu, what is that book?

Jeevabindu This is the book of bhadrabahu.

Son of man What does it teach?

Jeevabindu It teaches how to lose.

Son of man Everybody thrives by winning.

Jeevabindu I love to lose.

Son of man Lose what?

Jeevabindu Myself. But it is not easy. Nobody lets me lose.

Shepherd Do not shout. Wolves may come.

They reach at a rill at one side of the forest.

*The forest.
A wolf in the forest.
Ready to catch its prey.
The boys are in a rejoicing mood.
Some sheep are away from the men.
Especially the little lamb and her mother.
The boys are laughing loudly.
The shepherd warns again that wolves may
come, but nobody cares.
The wolf takes off with a howling.
The shepherd runs forward with his spear.
Sheep bleat and run for their lives.
The wolf turns away from the shepherd.
Son of man attacks the wolf.
The wolf growls and barks.
Jeevabindu runs towards them screaming.*

Jeevabindu No. Don't kill that animal.

The wolf and son of man turns to him.

Jeevabindu Spear down. Get back.

*Jeevabindu advances towards the animal
which seems confused.
The wolf wags its tail.*

Jeevabindu Poor creature! Are you hungry? Go somewhere else.
Go. Go.

The wolf turns back after a moment and goes.

The shepherd and son of man gather the sheep again to a safer place.

Jeevabindu Where is our chinna?

Son of man Chinna! Who is that?

Shepherd The little lamb.

They look for the lamb calling aloud, but no response from the valley.

Jeevabindu turns towards the forest shouting “chinna....chinna....”

Son of man intervenes.

Son of man We have to keep the other ninety nine sheep in tact.

Jeevabindu They know the way back to their home. The little lamb has lost her way. I should save her from the wolves.

Jeevabindu walks into the forest.

Son of man and the sheperd gather the sheep towards home.

The rill flows.

The wolves howl and the sheep bleat.

The shouts of jeevabindu are heard long after.

Beyond every other sound the bleating of the mother sheep is heard.

SCENE 13

Venue *A large meadow with shepherds and their herds.
A drama in open is conducted by a group of
ladies from the theatre of bharata. Villagers
have gathered there in large number.*

*The farmer is sitting with a few shepherds
and son of man near him.*

The drama is being staged.

*The ancient king sibi in his throne is the main
character.*

Farmer Do you say that my son jeevabindu and the little lamb
chinna are missing?

Shepherd No need to worry. They will soon be back.

Farmer That is my worry. Jeevabindu is having a peculiar
disposition.

*The drama is becoming pathetic. The king
is dethroned now.*

*Jeevabindu arrives with his book in one hand
and chinna in the other hand.*

The farmer starts weeping.

Some villagers turn back and look at them.

Jeevabindu has approached his father.

Tears flow through the eyes of the father.

Farmer What, my son, have you lost this time?

Jeevabindu I had lost all my wealth except the one hundred sheep. I have now abandoned ninety nine of them for the sake of this little lamb. I have reclaimed her. Hence the book of bhadrabahu says that I have lost everything except chinna and this book.

Farmer Have you not promised me that you will never leave me until you lose all your sheep?

Jeevabindu Yes, father. Until I have this chinna for me, I won't leave you either.

Chinna bleats.

Her mother runs forward from the herd and starts licking the legs of jeevabindu.

Jeevabindu But, see father. This mother is claiming her daughter chinna back.

He puts chinna down.

Chinna is sucking the milk of her mother.

Jeevabindu Now I have lost her too. The book of bhadrabahu says that I should leave here at once.

The crying father embraces his son.

Jeevabindu walks away.

The drama is concluding with a shower of flowers by the gods.

The desperate father holds the hands of son of man.

Chinna and her mother go after jeevabindu.

*Only to be brought back by the shepherd.
The villagers are at agony.
Jeevabindu is lonely.
Except for his book which he has embraced
to his heart.
Son of man is uneasy.
Jeevabindu is far away.
He sees nothing but his road in front of him.
People see jeevabindu in front of them.*

Farmer Son of man, my son is an innocent pet. He doesn't know the treacheries of the world.

Farmer pitifully pleads to son of man.

Farmer If you see him somewhere in this world on your way to the himalayas, do not pass him like a stranger. This is the request of a heart broken father.

Son of man I have always felt the need of a father. I love and respect fatherhood. I give my word that I shall regard him as my best friend and shall help him if he is in necessity.

Farmer I am sure that the boy will spend a few days in kanchi. He has a passion for the river vegavati. Son of man, I can make arrangements for your travel to kanchi.

*The road to kanchi is empty now.
Except for a bird flying towards its nest.*



SCENE 14 Kanchi, AD 18 February 15

Venue A small temple of goddess kottavai in a blissful form in the city of kanchi.

Azhaku, a beautiful lady of twenty years is playing veena, the indian string instrument. In the presence of goddess kottavai.

And a lot of her followers.

Among them a handsome and strong man of twenty five named marimuthu.

He has a number of friends around him.

Marimuthu sees;

*The goddess with oil lamps around her,
And azhaku with her veena in hand too;
The goddess and the musician again.
He is more interested in the musician.
Jeevabindu enters with some fragrant sticks
invented by him.
He burns a few of them before the goddess.
The followers smell and appreciate it.
Jeevabindu sits in an uplifted portion of the
construction.
The music in its conclusion.
Azhaku talks to jeevabindu.*

Azhaku Great soul, today you started your sale earlier.

Jeevabindu I did not want to miss your notes. My mind fills with joy whenever I hear you playing.

Azhaku When I smell the fragrance of your incense, I feel as if I am in a world of goddesses. Can I buy some incense sticks?

Jeevabindu Why not?

Azhaku I will meet you tomorrow morning at your residence

Jeevabindu As you wish.

*Azhaku with her friends walks to the shrine
to worship the goddess.
But she looks back at jeevabindu.*

*And at the goddess again.
Marimuthu couldn't help noticing it.
He and his friends move towards a corner of
the temple to speak in secret.*

Marimuthu I can't allow this. Azhaku is my girl. I loved her ever since she had declared her puberty. This nasty incense seller from nowhere should be sent elsewhere.

Friend He is a holy man from the south. Whatever he earns, he gives away as alms. We can do nothing against him in public. He is that much popular.

Marimuthu I have a plan. We shall meet him tonight at his residence. He will give anything, if we beg him.

*Jeevabindu is giving away his earnings of
the day to the public.
Marimuthu and his friends are planning to
execute their conspiracy.*

SCENE 15

Venue *A single roomed hut where jeevabindu resides.*

*There is an oil lamp in the room.
Jeevabindu is at meditation in the night.
When he hears a sound outside he opens the
door and lets marimuthu enter inside.*

Marimuthu Can we sit here?

Jeevabindu assents and they sit.

Marimuthu The hut is somewhat empty. Don't you have some material assets?

Jeevabindu Yes. My dress and a book, of course, and a few incense sticks.

Marimuthu Then pardon me. I have come here to beg for your clothe. As you have no other clothe, I am going back.

Marimuthu stands up but jeevabindu holds his hand.

Jeevabindu Don't hurry, my friend. This clothe was given to me by the book of bhadrabahu with a direction to lose it at kanchi. Now that you have claimed the same, I must hand it over to you.

Jeevabindu hands the clothe over to marimuthu who gladly receives it.

Marimuthu You are really a holy man. But pardon me.

Marimuthu slaps on the left cheek of jeevabindu and unclothes him.

Marimuthu I am a jealous lover. If you meet azhaku again, you will be killed.

*Marimuthu burns the clothe in the lamp.
The lamp burns no more, but the clothe does.*

SCENE 16

Venue Jeevabindu's hut.

Jeevabindu is shivering with no clothe over his body even in the early morning.

A female voice is heard from outside.

He opens his eyes, but do not respond.

Azhaku slowly opens the door enters into the hut and gets shocked to see the naked body of jeevabindu.

She closes her eyes with her hands and turns back, awaiting a response from him.

He is indifferent.

However he stands up and asks.

Jeevabindu Do you need any incense sticks?

Azhaku Don't you feel ashamed?

Jeevabindu No. The book doesn't tell me so.

Azhaku Book? Doesn't it tell you how to behave before young ladies?

Jeevabindu No. It totally ignores women.

Azhaku I have given my heart to a piece of carved stone.

Jeevabindu No lady. I love you. But it is a love to be lost.

Azhaku I love you too. Then why should you lose me?

Jeevabindu The book of bhadrabahu says so.

*Marimuthu and his friends are outside.
His friend shouts.*

Friend Get out swine, or else, you will be burnt alive.

*Azhaku and jeevabindu come out.
There is a crowd formed outside.
Some of them have torches in their hands.
Marimuthu advances towards jeevabindu.*

Marimuthu I had warned you. You have no right to live now.

*Marimuthu hits on the face of jeevabindu.
His friends also put hands on him.
Jeevabindu falls unconscious.
Azhaku is dragged away by some men.
They burn the hut too.
The crowd starts leaving.
The hut is burning.
A naked man lies unconscious.
With blood and wounds.
Still holding his book to his heart.
A shower of rain falls to console the victim.
A naked man lies unconscious.
A hand is extended towards him.
The body is turned aside.
Jeevabindu is carried away on the shoulders
of son of man.
He is in the company of a caravan.*

SCENE 17

Venue A hillside with plenty of trees and shade.

Son of man is caring the wounds of jeevabindu.

He wears a new pair of neat dress.

The entire caravan with all its animals and carts are resting in the shades of trees.

There is a tiny flow of water through the rocks.

People drink from it.

Son of man fetches some water from the flow for jeevabindu.

He drinks it.

Son of man is in a teasing mood.

Son of man Who stole your dress?

Jeevabindu The book of bhadrabahu.

Son of man The book has also brought you a few pairs of new dress.

Jeevabindu I am sorry to find that it is very difficult to lose even a pair of dress. But I easily lost my love.

Son of man You still have got a friend to accompany you to the empire of sakas.

They smile.

The caravan is ready to move.



SCENE 18 A saka city, AD 18 April 1

Venue A city of sakas of andhra dynasty.

A stone construction work site.

Son of man and jeevabindu do construction work.

Jeevabindu Just as a building is constructed from a strong foundation, I am constructing my life from the foundation of death. When I own something, I know that death is not my foundation.

Son of man I also used to think about my life. Suppression violence and victimization of the innocent have been my main concerns.

Jeevabindu If one needs peace, one should war. Without knowing death, life cannot be meaningful. All my dusks end up as if I won't live the next day.

Drum beats are heard outside.

Jeevabindu Another manifestation of the death of the day. The working hours have ended. I die this night and resurrect the next morning.

They pack their tools.

SCENE 19

Venue *A street near the site of construction.*

The drummers of the state declare a tomtom message for the public.

Drummers Hear ye people of the saka dynasty, this royal declaration by which each and every man and woman and child are bound, that in spite of having born in a high family of brahmins, a certain indusarman who committed adultery, robbery and treason and was declared as an outcaste and a mere 'manava' has nowadays ventured against the power of this irresistible empire, by committing the same offences of adultery, robbery and treason for which he or any of his accomplice is punishable with severe death or other appropriate tortures, and therefore all the subjects of this royal empire are hereby warned to be vigilant and to

hand over any information or knowledge of the person or whereabouts of the culprit without delay to the officers of the empire, any breach of which shall be punished as if such persons are accomplices of that cursed manava.

*The drummers pass to another street where the workshop of a blacksmith is situated.
The blacksmith santhakarni is forging some agricultural tools.*

Sweat and fire are the outcomes.

A batch of ten soldiers marches through the street with solid steps and heavy arms.

Santhakarni is working.

Ploughshares and sickles are around him.

And the burning ember.

And some broken swords too.

The soldiers enter into the workshop.

To find sathakarni bowing before them.

A soldier speaks to him.

Soldier Santhakarni, it is reported that you have converted twenty five swords into many more ploughshares. Is it true?

Santhakarni Yes, my master. The agriculturists needed more ploughshares; but sufficient steel was not available. Hence on their request I have converted some swords into ploughshares and sickles.

Soldier This is an offence against an empire preparing for war. So you get killed.

Santhakarni Let me pray for my soul.

Soldier Granted.

*Santhakarni prays.
Soldiers are in alert.
Santhakarni's bewildered wife.
A boy around ten years comes running
towards his father sathakarni.
The boy embraces him.*

Boy Father, I am afraid.

*Santhakarni bows his head to console his son.
A sword suddenly comes down and cuts
santhakarni's neck apart.
The child screams in terror and agony.
One of the soldiers takes hold of the child.
The boy struggles.
His mother tries to save the child.*

Mother Give me back my son.

The soldier kicks her back.

Soldier We are taking the boy as a prisoner. He shall be sold in public auction to recover the loss sustained by the empire.

*The soldiers drag the resisting child through
the street.*

SCENE 20

Venue *The crowded street near the site of construction.*

*Son of man and jeevabindu rush to the street
from the work site.*

*A rumble of the soldiers and the people
following them.*

The soldiers drag the child mercilessly.

His mother laments.

Jeevabindu is touched by the tragedy.

He speaks to son of man.

Jeevabindu Innocent boy! Let me see if I can do something for him. You should go at once and meet the architect to apprise him of the situation. I shall send you information.

Son of man nods.

The soldiers have already passed them.

Jeevabindu follows them at a distance.

Son of man stands still to watch him going.

*The lament of the mother becomes
unbearable even to the soldiers.*

One soldier pulls her back in force.

She falls down and becomes unconscious.

The mob leaves her to follow the boy.

Jeevabindu fetches water and awakens her.

He consoles her when she sits up.

Jeevabindu Mother, the book of bhadrabahu says that your

son will be freed today itself. Take my hand and come with me.

They walk together to the slave market.

SCENE 21

Venue *The slave market of the city.*

The auctioneer is selling a young girl of sixteen produced by an old man.

Auctioneer Is this girl a brahmin or a kshatriya?

Old man Neither.

Auctioneer Is she a vaisya or a sudra?

Old man None of these.

Auctioneer Then the auction can be started. One silver.

Bidder 1 Thirty silvers.

Bidder 2 Forty five.

Bidder 3 Fifty six.

Bidder 2 Sixty four.

Auctioneer Sixty four silvers. Any more? No? Sixty four silvers for the first shanthi, second shanthi and

the final shanthi. The bid is fixed for sixty four silvers.

The second bidder remits the sixty four silvers and takes the girl away.

The old man is handed over his share in the bid amount.

The soldiers hand over the boy for auction.

Jeevabindu and the mother of the boy are within the crowd.

The auctioneer starts his work.

The soldiers are alert.

Auctioneer This child prisoner shall be sold in auction the next.
Is this boy a brahmin or a kshatriya?

Soldier Neither.

Jeevabindu No. You are lying. He is both.

Auctioneer How can a boy be both a brahmin and a kshatriya?

Jeevabindu His father was a learnt scholar in lohasastra of patanjali. Hence he is a brahmin. His father has handled numerous weapons in his life. Hence he is a kshatriya.

Auctioneer Your argument is absurd. Is the boy a vaisya or a sudra?

Soldier None of these.

Jeevabindu He was both. His father sold swords and

ploughshares. So he is a vaisya. His father has served the satrapa in repairing the weapons of the empire. So he is a sudra.

Auctioneer Absurd. One cannot be a vaisya and a sudra at the same time.

Jeevabindu I may be wrong. But consider if he shall be proved to be belonging to any one of these classes later.

Auctioneer That means trouble.

Soldier This boy is a bound prisoner of the empire for a sum of fifty silvers.

Jeevabindu If somebody pays fifty silvers for him, can you free this boy?

Soldier Yes.

Jeevabindu Then I offer you fifty silvers.

Auctioneer Pay it.

Jeevabindu I have got no money. I may sell my treasure.

Auctioneer What is your treasure?

Jeevabindu The book of bhadrabahu.

Auctioneer A book? Of course it doesn't belong to any varnas. Hand it over to me. Let me see whether it is a golden book.

Jeevabindu hands over the book.

Auctioneer The holy book of bhadrabahu for one silver.

No bidder comes forward.

Auctioneer The price goes down. Half silver.

No bidder comes forward.

Auctioneer Two coppers.

Bidder Three coppers.

Auctioneer Three coppers, one shanthi, two santhi and the final third shanthi.

The book of bhadrabahu is handed over to the bidder for three coppers.

Auctioneer Your treasure is worth only three coppers. Where is the balance?

Jeevabindu Then I am offering my worthless body.

Auctioneer Are you one among the four varnas?

Jeevabindu No.

Auctioneer But your words reveal that you are a brahmin.

Jeevabindu I belong to the south. It is evident from the new

scripture that brahmins would not go south.

Auctioneer This learned man outside the varnas has offered himself as a slave. One silver for him.

Bidder 1 Fifty silvers.

Bidder 2 Fifty golds.

Bidder 3 Fifty one golds.

Bidder 4 One hundred golds for him.

Auctioneer One hundred gold coins, one shanthi, two santhi and the final third shanthi. You will get now seventy five golds and three coppers. Out of this fifty silvers go to the empire. Since you have become a slave whom shall I pay the amount to?

Jeevabindu Give the gold to the boy and his mother. The three coppers shall go to son of man who shall be found in the house of architect tonight.

The fourth bidder pays the bid amount.

The boy and his mother are in happy tears.

Jeevabindu addresses her.

Jeevabindu Mother, when you get the money do not forget the girl who was sold before me.

Mother Blessed one, I shall free her as you have done for my son. What goodness have we done to the world

for all the help from such a great man like you?

Jeevabindu Your husband has worked hard to alleviate the poverty of humankind and has offered his life for the purpose. There is no greater love than what is offered by him to his fellow men.

A woman shouts from the mob laughing

Woman Jeevabindu, why have you sold your book first?

Jeevabindu The book of bhadrabahu was sold by the book of bhadrabahu.

A laughing man comes forward to remark.

Man This man has certainly gone mad.

SCENE 22

Venue *The house of architect.*

*All the lights of the house are put out.
A merchant with a lamp knocks at the door.
The door is seen open even in the night.
Merchant calls out loudly.*

Merchant Architect..... Architect.....

*Merchant sneakingly enters into the house
to receive a heavy blow in his head.
Some lamps are lit inside the house.*

Architect holds a metallic bar on his hand and shouts.

Architect Manava, I have caught you.

The head and hands of merchant are full of fresh blood.

Son of man enters from inside.

Merchant I am not the manava. Help me. I am a merchant in search of son of man.

Architect Liar, damn liar! You can't beat me!

Merchant Jeevabindu has sent me. He has sold his book of bhadrabahu for three coppers.

Architect Impossible! He won't sell his book for one hundred gold coins.

Merchant He was a bit mad today. He sold himself too to save a boy from slavery.

Architect Now I believe you. I am sorry for hitting you. Won't you pardon me?

Merchant Of course. Jeevabindu has a message to you.

Architect What is his message?

Merchant He wishes to hand over the three coppers to son of man.

Merchant hands over the three coppers to son of man

Son of man His greatest book is worth three coppers only!

Merchant But he got hundred gold coins for himself.

*Son of man dresses merchant's wounds.
Merchant is feeling severe pain.
But he doesn't stop giving information.*

Son of man Where does the bidder belong to?

Merchant Somewhere in the krishna basin.

Son of man Is it far away?

Merchant Why do you ask such questions?

Son of man I want to follow him.

Architect I have some friends there to help you.

Merchant You should help me first. I feel dizzy.

*Merchant falls down unconscious.
They move him to a safe place for nursing.*

Son of man What are your friends doing at krishna?

Architect They grow grapes.



SCENE 23 A vineyard,
AD 18 The full moon day of the enlightened one

Venue A vineyard in a western tributary of krishna.

Master suddhadatha and his servant are walking through a remote part of the vineyard.

Monkeys and peacocks sit here and there.

They eat grapes.

There is nobody to keep them away.

Servant threatens them.

Suddhadatha Uncontrollable creatures! When the land lord comes he will be angry to see these things here. Servant

swapnamali, have you got any plan to get these things rid of this vineyard.

Swapnamali Master suddhadatha, the vineyard may be divided into blocks which are separated by waste lands of at least twelve yards length.

Suddhadatha No. Clearing some of the vine may invite the displeasure of the landlord. At least the peacocks give a natural beauty to the vineyard.

Swapnamali Though our yields decrease day by day, the vineyard is growing more wild and handsome.

Suddhadatha The landlord may visit the grove at any time. I have come from a prison on the mercy of the landlord and do not want to go back there. Meanwhile let us meet jnanadatha and karmadatha for advice.

*They glee and turn towards their way.
The monkeys and peacocks are happier.*

SCENE 24

Venue *A vineyard of jnanadatha.*

*Jnanadatha and jeevabindu are inspecting
a vineyard which had received a lot of
attention.*

But there are symbols of recent negligence.

Jnanadatha I have always wanted to be a teacher. But the landlord

asked me to research on the cultivation of grapes. I have been a successful farmer too. But karmadatha has upset all my plans.

Jeevabindu How can a man be responsible for the mistakes of another, master jnanadatha?

Jnanadatha I know that I am the only person responsible. He comes everyday. Teaching is such a craze for me. I simply love it. I even spend hours referring books and brooding over issues raised by karmadatha.

Jeevabindu Ignorance is the greatest sin and luckily you are wise.

They sit in a shade.

Jnanadatha I doubt now. I am wise only as far as my teaching is concerned. When it comes to my own vineyard, I have neglected my entire responsibilities. Look, the yield is diminishing. Who shall believe a researcher who could not put into practice his own theories?

Karmadatha and son of man enter.

Karmadatha We will. Your theories have been proved beyond doubt in our vineyard. We obtained a perfect yield in this season. Master jnanadatha, when it comes to the question of excess yields how will it affect the market?

Jnanadatha The market? Market is a place where goods perish and words flourish. We need a strategy. Let me think about that.

*Karmadatha and jnanadatha walk together
discussing the matter.*

*Jeevabindu and son of man are left alone.
They embrace each other.*

Son of man Do you dream azhaku?

Jeevabindu No, but I often dream her veena playing.

Son of man All right. Why did you send me those three coppers?

Jeevabindu As far as this slave is concerned, book of bhadrabahu is not sold, because it is still within my memory. Only the book is sold, but the knowledge is not transferred. When the body of this slave is enough to free that child from slavery, the boy or his mother do not have any right on the book. Three coppers won't fetch much and so many people won't think it worthy of anything except a few like you. So the coppers were sent to you as a mark of our friendship.

They pluck a bunch of grapes.

Jeevabindu Son of man, we are branches of the same vine rooted in the same aspirations. If there is no root, there is no vine, no branches and no fruit too. If there is no fruit, when the landlord comes, he will cut the entire vine and put it in the great fire of death.

Son of man Will the land lord ever come?

Jeevabindu He comes like a manava. Nobody knows when the land lord comes.

The masters return.

Karmadatha The land lord comes tonight. You are invited to have supper at my home this evening.

SCENE 25

Venue A cottage at the vineyard of karmadatha.

The three masters and their servants sit around a dining table.

Swapnamali is serving wine to the masters.

Karmadatha How is the wine, jnanadatha?

Jnanadatha Top class.

Suddhadatha hits swapnamali instantly.

Suddhadatha You have served jnanadatha with the best wine and its oozing to me. Am I not your master? Keep away from here, you betrayer.

Suddhadatha hits swapnamali again.

Karmadatha Cool down. My servant shall serve you the best wine.

Son of man serves suddhadatha with the best wine until he gets satisfied.

Suddhadatha This is good wine. But beware, karmadatha, lest you may be served with oozing as well by your servant.

Karmadatha No chance. Son of man is a very nice servant who knows better.

*They all laugh and enjoy the wit.
Dharmabhadra, an old man with a fierce and
loving face enters with his four bodyguards.*

Dharmabhadra Do not laugh. Laughter is the beginning of weeping. I am dharmabhadra of kurukshethra, your land lord.

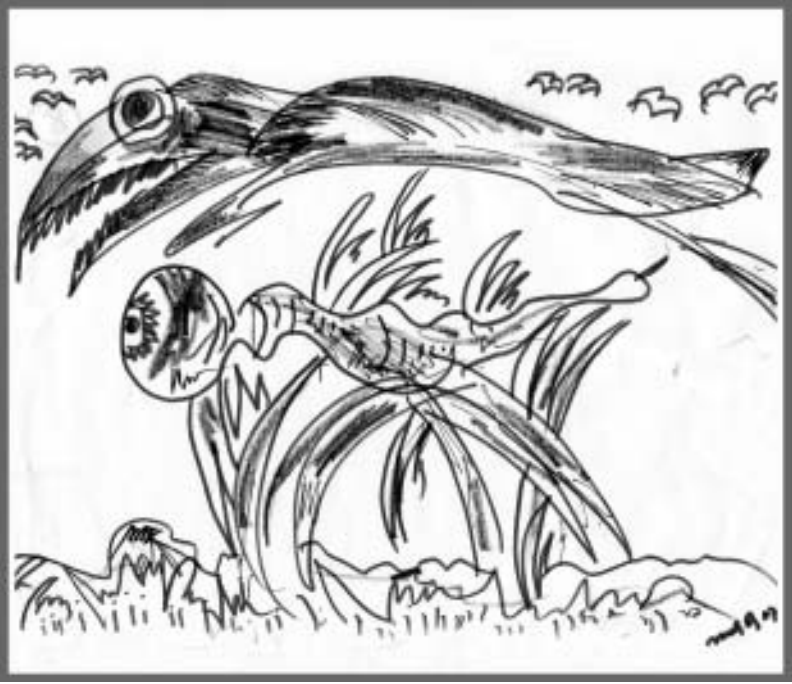
*All the masters and their servants kneel
before him.*

Dharmabhadra I have visited your vineyards. Suddhadatha and jnanadatha have not shown loyalty towards their duties. But karmadatha is faithful in his small responsibility. I shall make him master of more. Suddhadatha shall leave me at once to his previous abode, the prison. Jnanadatha shall also be imprisoned for a while, while his slave shall be handed over to karmadatha who shall take care of my entire agricultural ventures in the valley of godavari.

Karmadatha Great master, jnanadatha has been working hard to instruct me. Without him I would not have been successful. So show mercy on him.

Dharmabhadra Well said, karmadatha. Jnanadatha is pardoned and shall be appointed as the chief advisor of our researches in kurukshethra.

Jnanadatha and karmadatha embrace.



SCENE 26 Godavari, AD 18 August 14

*Venue An agricultural land in a village with a palisade
near the banks of river godavari.*

The agricultural land and palisade.

The palisade and the village.

The village with its huts and vaults.

And a grand banyan tree.

*A meeting of the villagers, jeevabindu, son
of man, karmadatha, and similar persons
takes place in the shades of that tree.*

Dharmabhadra presides over it.

Dharmabhadra I am appointing karmadatha, a great expert in

agricultural sciences as my lease holder of the properties in this village. As you are aware, our lease holders have always exerted for the well being of the entire farmers of the village. The two projects immediately to be executed by karmadatha are construction of a check dam and a scheme of intensive cultivation of wheat.

Villager Well said, great master dharmabhadra. Our cooperation is guaranteed. We accept the leadership of master karmadatha.

Karmadatha Thanks a lot for your affection towards me. I shall ensure the execution of the projects declared by our great master. In my physical absence due to emergency if any, you may consult my servant son of man. He is a trustworthy person.

SCENE 27

Venue *A wheat field surrounded by bushes and rocks at one side and extended limitless towards the other side.*

Ten sets of yokes with bulls are engaged for ploughing.

Ploughmen and bulls are in a sense of competition.

When ploughing is completed at certain places, leveling starts there.

Karmadatha and son of man supervise.

Jeevabindu sows seeds.

*He is in a state of indifference.
Many seeds fall on rocks, many in the bushes,
many on bad and unleveled lands and most
in the good fertile land.*

Son of man You are sowing where much of the seeds will be lost forever.

Karmadatha You fool, seeds need not be wasted.

Jeevabindu This slave is of course a fool. Had I been wise, I would have sowed only words. Then there would be hundredfold yield even on hard rocks.

Karmadatha Well, and then go east, where your words will shoot up and fetch golden harvest.

*Jeevabindu moves to the eastern good soil
for a perfect sowing.*

SCENE 28

Venue *A bushy land near a channel that flows from a weir.*

*The bushes are burnt.
In the supervision of son of man.
To prepare a land for cultivation.
Workers cut the bushes to throw them into
the burning fire.
The workers work hard.
They are in a happy mood.*

*A yelling sound from a worker.
They stop working to see him speak.*

Worker Look! A thorny plant with a ripe beautiful fruit.

*A beautiful plant similar to cherry.
Workers gather around it.
Son of man inspects the plant.
And even tastes its fruit.*

Son of man Transplant that plant with soil to the most fertile soil of our farm.

*The workers carefully pluck the plant out
with the soil.
A worker carries it to the garden.*

SCENE 29

Venue *A garden where the transplanted plant is
planted.*

*Jeevabindu is watering the plant.
Karmadatha observes him.
A worker arrives in a hurry with information.
Behind them there is a great wheat farm.*

Worker Master, some of our rivals sowed weed where we had sowed seed. Both the seed and weed have shot out well. Can we remove the weed from the farm? Or shall we wait until they are grown?

Karmadatha No. It may harm the crop. Let the weeds grow until the crops get ready for reaping. Then the wheat shall be reaped and gathered in our threshing floor and the weed can be thrown out and burnt.

Jeevabindu Poor men! They don't know how to clear even weed!

Jeevabindu sighs.

SCENE 30

Venue *A crossroad at the village centre.*

Some villagers are sitting under a banyan tree near a pond.

They are in conversation on the new methods of karmadatha.

Kusaladhara, a middle aged man with a look of fatigue and inability approaches them.

Kusaladhara Dear young friends, I am a man of meager means and I am sick.

He coughs

Kusaladhara I have a land for five men's ploughing. Could any of you please plough my field? Though I do not have money, I can give many blessings to the one who help me.

Villager Kusaladhara, we know that you are crooked. When the season of reaping had come, we saw you working

better than anyone else. So, go, get to the town to play your tricks where nobody knows you.

*Kusaladhara acts as a handicapped man.
He is on his way to the town exclaiming.*

Kusaladhara Let me see if there are any better men in the town with a heart to help the needy. All our villagers are blockheads and have become good for nothing.

SCENE 31

Venue A big fig tree at the centre of karmadatha's farm.

*Karmadatha and a wood cutter.
The wood cutter penetrates an axe deep into
the tree.
Son of man intervenes.*

Son of man Master, why should you cut down this fig tree?

Karmadatha Because it gives no fruit.

Son of man Don't get angry, master. Let us cut the branches of the tree first. Then we shall look after it with manure and water for one year. If it shall still be fruitless, we may cut it.

Karmadatha Do as you like. But the tree should bear fruit. All the fruitless shall be destroyed.

The wood cutter pulls the axe out.

SCENE 32

Venue A rock near a rill.

The music of the mystic rill.

Group music of natural birds.

A fortune teller with a bird awaits for his customers.

He is all alone.

Jeevabindu and son of man pass by.

Fortune teller Stop there young men.

They stop.

Fortune teller Let me tell your fortunes.

Jeevabindu comes forward.

Fortune teller You will gain though you lose everything.

Son of man comes forward.

Fortune teller You will lose though you gain everything.

When they go, the man declares.

Fortune teller And one of you will give his life for the sake of another.

Son of man throws money to the fortune teller.

Son of man I shall pay for your prediction.

SCENE 33

Venue *A vault on a tree. Fourth quarter of the night.*

*Villagers beat drums to threaten wild boars.
A long human humming as a signal to them.
Wild boars rush through the crops.
Deer are dashing.
A villager in the vault yells out in warning.*

Villager Animals are destroying crops.

*Men and hounds chase wild animals.
The boars cause more destruction.
Panthers are also seen in the group.*

Villager What happened to these animals to leave their natural habitats? Something has happened. We should double the night watch to protect our farms.

*Men are still after the animals.
A few cows enter the fields in the darkness,
To be shone in the twilight of predawn
horizon.
Like the beautiful red eastern sky above the
mountains,
Red cows follow red cows in the valley.
Thousands of them spread heavy dust.
Armed ranchers on horses lead them,
With burning torches in their hands.
Behind them the giant red morning sun rises.*

SCENE 34

Venue *A heavily populated part of the village.*

The ranchers are looting the unarmed villagers.

People are robbed off their food supplies and valuables.

Those who resist are knocked down.

Asses and mules are untied from the mills to carry the looted goods.

Women are roughly handled.

Children are beaten mercilessly.

The worst tragedy is the completely eaten up farms all around.

Very few fields have survived.

SCENE 35

Venue *The meeting place of the villagers under the banyan tree.*

An urgent meeting of the villagers.

The banyan tree in its huge size.

Son of man and jeevabindu in the group.

The village head addresses the villagers.

Village head We have brought water from the river to our fields. We have transformed wilderness into fertile land. We have killed birds and animals to protect our crops. Our crops have grown fine too. But the nomadic

cattle ranchers from the north entered our village though the eastern hills and destroyed our cultivation. They even looted all our reserve food supplies and tortured our villagers. We still had hopes to survive with our southern fields where the cowherd did not reach. But worms and flies have infected them now. We fear that our cultivation may fail and a famine may invade our village.

Son of man In such an emergency, let us prepare ourselves to face the adversities.

Village head Men may face the famine. Our women may survive it with much difficulty. But look at our innocent children. Can they ever survive it?

Son of man When shall the crops be ripe for reaping?

Village head After twenty days.

Son of man Let us make some bird stands today itself in the fields. The birds though they do not sow have some right to eat a part of our yield. Let the blacksmiths make sufficient sickles. But beware. Nobody should go near the crops. We shall take care of everything. Then let us gather at a place to pray until the reaping days. When we gather, those who have food may bring it and share it with those who do not have it. The rest shall be taken care of by us in due course.

Jeevabindu And beyond all, son of man will teach you some basic lessons these days on the principles of survival among agricultural groups.

SCENE 36

Venue *An open place.*

*All the villagers have gathered there.
There is no inequality among them.
Men women and children are praying.
Their existence is challenged.
Their wishes are common and genuine.
Jeevabindu finishes his meditation first.*

Jeevabindu We know that we are hungry and thirsty. It is time to have our food.

Son of man We have five loaves of bread and a few fried fishes. Those who have brought food may contribute to this.

*The village head and some of his assistants
come forward with a few baskets to collect
the available food stuff.
Villagers give whatever they have brought.*

Son of man Let us remember that our primary consideration will go to our children and women. All those who serve, let them be fed first.

*They distribute food among children first.
Then to women, and finally to all men.
Son of man and jeevabindu being the last.
Leaving a balance of twelve basketfuls of
food stuff.
To be kept for the next service.*

SCENE 37

Venue *A wheat field with golden harvest.*

*Son of man walks though the cultivated area.
To inspect the bird stands and the beautiful
birds around them.*

*They are catching worms and insects to eat.
Son of man kisses a plant with a lot of yield.
The plants dance in a gentle breeze.
But of course there are weeds as well amidst
the crops.*

SCENE 38

Venue *A street in the village.*

*A villager runs through the street calling out
loudly.*

Villager The crops are plenty. The reapers are only a few.
Everybody, please come and reap the crop. The
wages is one silver each.

He repeats the same.

SCENE 39

Venue *A wheat field.*

Reapers come and reap.

*They come one after another.
They reap.
More workers are still coming in.
They carry reaped wheat to the near by
threshing place.
Workers still come late.
Threshing.
All other agricultural activities as well.
Some workers burn weeds.
Huge flames from there.
Kusaladhara come running and asks a group
of late come workers.*

Kusaladhara I have a little farm ploughed by lazy urban people.
Can some of you reap it for an exchange of blessings?

They laugh. But he is not easily disappointed.

SCENE 40

Venue *The wheat field after reaping.*

*The reapers are paid their wages by son of
man and head of the village.
The early workers express their ample
dissatisfaction.*

Reaper We have worked early and we have been paid only
one silver each. But that man and this woman came
only in the noon. They also are paid one silver each.
Is it not injustice?

Son of man The early and the late had the same promise of one silver. The wages are not only for the work done, but also for the fulfillment of the promises made. Haven't you received what you are promised? Why should you envy?

Jeevabindu These reapers may perhaps lose their temper too. Son of man does not know what he is doing now.

SCENE 41

Venue The place where wheat is winnowed.

A dozen workers are engaged in winnowing wheat.

The husks and chaff are removed in the wind.

Lady worker Son of man is a wonderful personality. He surpasses his master karmadatha.

Winnower He must be a magician.

Lady worker Or a sorcerer at least.

Reaper Think how he has fed us all from nothing.

Winnower Only a holy man can do that.

Lady reaper Anyhow, he is better than our village head.

Lady worker I wish if we could make him that!

Reaper Me too.

Lady reaper If karmadatha had been here, he would have done the same thing.

Winnower He is not that much good. He is treating that holy man jeevabindu as a slave. It is heard that jeevabindu accepted slavery to save the life of an innocent child.

The wind blows wild to upset the winnowing.

SCENE 42

Venue *The meeting place in the shades of the banyan tree.*

Karmadatha addresses the villagers.

Karmadatha I heard the great things son of man and jeevabindu had done to this village and our farm. But unfortunately unrest has been aroused on the issue of keeping them as servant and slave. Let me confess that in my heart I have only considered them as my young brothers. However considering your feelings I hereby declare jeevabindu as a free man. He shall also be paid one hundred gold coins.

Great applaud.

Karmadatha Son of man is rewarded twenty five gold coins for his valuable service and he is relieved off from my service with effect from tomorrow dawn.

Villagers celebrate his declaration.



**SCENE 43 A village of sculptors,
AD 18 December 17**

Venue A hill tract near a tributary of river tapti.

*Jeevabindu and son of man travel on donkeys
with a few possessions along the banks of
the tributary.*

The river is not deep there.

*When they finally cross the river, they see
sculptures all around.*

Of gods, damsels and holy men.

With acts of grace, warfare, piety and sex.

Even huts have stories of artistic activities.

It is the village of the sculptors.

SCENE 44

Venue *A cave of a sculptor where he has exhibited the statues of gods he has created.*

Buyers listen to the words of the sculptor.

Sculptor This is the vedic indra in the soul form. You may name him atmendra. This is goddess usha grazing her cattle. Parjanya is the one with a thunder in his hand. Varuni is the goddess of liquor. Varuni in her romantic ecstasy is madira. That celestial dancer is padmapriya.

Buyer I need a god with six arms. It is the latest fashion.

Sculptor Of course. You will get a six-handed rudra next month at thirty golds.

Buyer Make it fifteen.

Sculptor Twenty five.

Buyer No bargaining for a matter of worship. Let us fix it at twenty gold.

Sculptor Done.

Other buyer Can I get some cheaper sculpture here?

Sculptor I am specializing in costly gods. My son is working in the next cave. He is cheaper.

Other buyer Show me the place.

SCENE 45

Venue *Another cave at whose entrance a naked couple carved in rock receives the guests.*

Buyers and the sculptor enter the cave to find the sculptor's son sleeping at the feet of a beautiful nude in stone.

Other buyer What gods are these?

Sculptor Gods? These are mere vulgarity. Necessary evil of the age of my son. Though his craft is good, I simply hate his themes. They are antisocial.

The sculptor shouts at his son.

Sculptor Wake up, kaladhara,

Kaladhara wakes up.

Sculptor You have got visitors.

Other buyer Can you introduce me your works?

Kaladhara With pleasure.

He does so.

Kaladhara See my vasavadattha who loved udayana. Next to her is the ecstasy of vasanthasena, the servant of god. This is the spiritual union of usha and anirudha.

Other buyer Are they gods? Perhaps recent incarnations of ancient gods?

Kaladhara No. They are heroes and heroines of our popular literature.

Buyer Of literature? Are they as popular as our godly pantheon?

Kaladhara Gods are like eastern sky. But don't you see the western sky as well? As long as the mystic beauty therein is impressive, literature can survive. But when the true night comes, only the real life survives.

Sculptor The skies! Pooh! The entire society stands on the legs of our gods. Literature and erotic sculpting are fools' fantasies. Behold, people may look at the legs of your lasses with lust. But my gods reserve their reverence and the learned as well as the least fall at the ankles of my deities with folded hands and flooded eyes. That makes all the difference.

Buyer You must be correct. I have never read a book in my entire life. But I did not spend a single day without worshipping my deity.

Sculptor Because ankles of gods are better than legs of lasses.

*Sculptor walks out followed by others.
Kaladhara is all alone in his cave thinking.*

Kaladhara The ankles of the deities! It is a very interesting proposition.

SCENE 46

Venue *A rill.*

*The ankles of a man crossing a rill,
Followed by another,
And many others.
A caravan is crossing the rill.
The evening sky is reflected in the cool water.
Then waves interrupt the calm water and the
sky dances therein.
Fires are seen lighted around.
Son of man followed by jeevabindu settles
on a leveled bedrock.
A merchant shouts.*

Merchant Let us camp here tonight.

SCENE 47

Venue *The cave of the sculptor in the night.*

*The ankles of a man move steadily in the
darkness.
The ankles of the sculptures of gods.
A very big iron bar in a strong hand.
A very strong blow on the ankle of a god.
The statue collapses.
The destruction continues.
The cave becomes a total mess.
When the iron bar is aimed at the dancing*

*rudra, the destroyer hesitates and leaves the
rudra, but the action is continued until the
destruction of all the sculptures except the
dancing rudra is ensured.*

*The destroyer returns to the dancing rudra
for his final assessment of the piece of art,
commenting*

Destroyer This king of dancers may do the old man some good.

He throws down his tool and walks out.

SCENE 48

Venue *A place for execution of the condemned.*

*Kaladhara is bound in chains.
A hanging rope beside him in all its horror.
A burning fire and a pot with lethal poison.
Poisonous arrows and a bow.
An executioner's axe at a corner.
A man buried in earth with his head above
ground level.
An elephant ready to crush his skull.
The local judge and his assistants are on
their seats for the execution of the accused.
An absolutely wretched old sculptor with his
both eyes ember red emitting deep sorrow
and venomous hatred.
Jeevabindu and son of man amidst the crowd.
And above all the dancing rudra too.*

- Judge** Is the complainant present?
- Sculptor** Yes, the respected one.
- Judge** What is your complaint?
- Sculptor** All my sculptures of almighty gods except one of dancing rudra have been destroyed.
- Judge** Is this your survived god?
- Sculptor** Yes.
- Judge** Have you or anybody else witnessed the tragic incident?
- Sculptor** No. But only one person in the entire fourteen worlds shall dare to do such a shameless deed.
- Judge** And who is that?
- Sculptor** Who else other than my only son kaladhara!
- Judge** Kaladhara, have you committed the crime?
- Kaladhara** No.
- Judge** If not you, then who is the culprit?
- Kaladhara** The survived almighty god must have destroyed the ankles of all other gods to prove his supremacy.
- Sculptor** He is committing blasphemy too.

Kaladhara Are your gods powerless even to destroy the statues of his rival gods made by you? Have all of them turned impotent one morning? To tell the truth, they are not at all gods, but only lifeless stones badly carved by you.

Sculptor He disgraces sculpting too.

Kaladhara Beauty is beyond all feelings of disgrace. My father's survived sculpture had the real grace and beauty. So it could save itself from destruction.

Sculptor My son has no sense of repentance. He should be punished.

Judge Let me imprison him?

Sculptor No.

Judge Fine him?

Sculptor No.

Judge Or free him?

Sculptor No; never.

Judge What else?

Sculptor He should be killed.

Judge To burn him alive or to hang him?

Sculptor Both. Then the rest of his mortal body be pierced by poisonous arrows, cut into pieces by axes and his skull be crushed by the elephant.

Judge Any objections for that?

Jeevabindu moves forward.

Jeevabindu Yes, respected one.

Judge You may speak.

Jeevabindu This is only a condemnable and cruel allegation by a loveless father against his only offspring. If such incidents repeat in our country, our entire social set up may experience severe setbacks.

Judge But the allegations are legally survivable.

Jeevabindu May be. But there is no charge against kaladhara of an attempt to destroy the life, person or respect of his father.

Judge It is true.

Jeevabindu What else have you lost, sculptor?

Sculptor Money. The entire efforts of my life.

Jeevabindu How much are they worth?

Sculptor One hundred gold coins.

Jeevabindu If I pay you that sum, will you let your son free? Or would you rather claim his death?

Sculptor I would prefer money. Let him have his life.

Jeevabindu When reason starts working, lives get saved.

As jeevabindu takes out the money to pay the sum, kaladhara dares to speak.

Kaladhara Let me speak for a minute.

Judge Granted.

Kaladhara Do those hundred gold coins include the cost of the saved sculpture?

Sculptor No.

Kaladhara How much more will it cost?

Sculptor An additional twenty gold coins.

Kaladhara My dear rescuer, please pay one hundred and twenty to the old man. Let him be fully satisfied.

Judge He is paying one hundred for no commitment. Do you want him to pay more to your own father?

Jeevabindu Son of man, lend me twenty more gold.

*Son of man gives jeevabindu twenty gold.
Jeevabindu pays the entire sum.*

Judge Merciful one, kaladhara and the sculpture of rudra are your assets now.

Kaladhara addresses the judge.

Kaladhara Allow me to make a declaration.

Judge You are allowed.

Kaladhara And your permission too, my new master.

Jeevabindu Yes. You are most welcome.

Kaladhara My father is really a great sculptor. He had made lots of sculptures in stone. But to know the exact greatness of an artist all his works need be destroyed except his masterpieces. It has come true in his case. All his unsold works are destroyed except his life time achievement the dancing rudra. Let me name it as the king of the dancers. As all of you know, my new master, a worthy and lovable son of mother earth had to pay a lot of gold coins to save my life and my father's ruin. In exchange he has received the priceless piece of artwork of a potential god and the eternal friendship of this humble man. We must make good his loss. I wish if he would be willing to put this sculpture in auction.

Jeevabindu I am indebted to my friend to release this gentleman. So I am inclined to put this great artwork in auction, if the honourable judge permits me to do so.

Judge Permission granted. Auctioneer, start the bid.

Auctioneer Twenty golds for this great work beyond description.

Bidder Fifty.

The auction goes high upwards.

A shaven monk indradatha is assessing the entire scenario to tell his assistant a secret.

Indradatha These two men have achieved great respect in the basins of godavari. They do better here. Engage your friend sarpaka to spy on them. I have a very strong feeling that they will affect my future life somehow.

Assistant As you order, master indradatha. But see how big the final bid amount is.

Auctioneer Five hundred and fifty five golds the first shanthi, the second shanthi and the final shanthi. The auction is confirmed for five hundred and fifty five gold coins.

The auctioneer collects the bid amount.

When the bidder takes possession of the artwork, son of man, jeevabindu and kaladhara discuss.

Kaladhara Where are we going?

Son of man We are starting a new business in the city of paithan.

When the auctioneer pours gold coins into jeevabindu's bag, kaladhara views the entire scene of execution with a smile of relief.



SCENE 49 Paithan, AD 19 January 4

Venue A street in the city of paithan.

*Parvathaka rides on his bullock cart filled
with mangoes to the market of the street.
His wife and assistant haimavathy hums a
tune, “mangoes....., ripe mangoes.....”
As parvathaka rides he greets,
The serpent charmer sarpaka,
The liquor man shandilya,
The trade agent budhadatha,
The priest agnisikha,
The wrestler mallarudra,
The tailor amsumali and
Many others.*

*As they turn from the temple of the goddess
of the city, both parvathaka and haimavathy
offer respectful bows to the goddess.
The temple is in its peak prosperity.
As they enter the market place,
Haimavathy is greeted by karmasekhara, the
slave merchant.*

Karmasekhara Haimavathy is becoming more charitable day by day.

Haimavathy We believe that feeding helpless beings brings us prosperity.

Parvathaka Will twenty mangoes be sufficient for you for the day?

Karmasekhara I need more. But I hate to spend money for others.
Give as much as you can afford.

Haimavathy You need not worry. The mango trees are crazy this year. There are as many mangoes in the branches as there are leaves. So we shall give you more.

*Haimavathy gives karmasekhara a bag full
of mangoes.
Karmasekhara turns to go.
Parvathaka reminds him.*

Parvathaka Ensure that all the mangoes are given to your women slaves. Remember that it is not paid, but alms.

Karmasekhara I shall remember.

*As karmasekhara goes,
Buyers surround them.
Mallarudra, the servant supplier and
Amsumali, the tailor among them.
Parvathaka is doing good business.*

Amsumali Twenty mangoes for me. I am in a hurry. I should meet kaladhara soon.

Mallarudra That young merchant seems to be really very rich.

SCENE 50

Venue *A medicine store owned by kaladhara.*

*Budhadatha, the trade agent is selling a
balance to kaladhara.*

Budhadatha This balance was used to weigh gold. I am not doing that business any more. Do you plan to start that profession?

Kaladhara No. Medicine is at times more precious than gold. So I need such a balance. How much shall I pay for this balance?

Budhadatha Five silver.

Kaladhara I know that you are in necessity for money. So I shall pay you five.

Kaladhara puts five silver coins in one pan.

Kaladhara This silver in one pan does not simply claim its equivalent in the other pan, but it claims the entire balance itself in this case.

Kaladhara smiles.

Kaladhara Take the money and the balance is mine.

Budhadatha takes the money and goes.

Kaladhara This balance will ensure my good luck.

Kaladhara moves to the next shop to meet son of man who is trying to sell apples to a customer who is not showing any interest.

Customer These apples are very costly. I would rather buy mangoes.

Son of man These apples are imported from the himalayas.

Customer Apples! Figs! And a lot more useless fruits!

Kaladhara These fruits have medicinal value.

Customer What do they do?

Kaladhara They keep your body youthful.

Customer Then give me two.

Son of man Ten coppers.

Customer Then I don't want my youthfulness back.

Son of man What can you pay for that?

Customer One copper for two is my best bargain.

Son of man Think of a better price tomorrow and come back.

The man goes out.

Kaladhara and son of man move to the fig shop of jeevabindu.

The figs are beautifully arranged.

Jeevabindu Can I offer you some figs?

Kaladhara Yes, master, if they are a gift.

Jeevabindu I am seriously thinking whether I should give away all figs as gift.

Kaladhara What is the provocation?

Jeevabindu Ever since the mangoes have become so cheap, nobody buys figs.

Son of man Same problem with my apples too.

Jeevabindu I even tried to sell figs for the exchange of some mangoes. But parvathaka did not get impressed.

Son of man I tried to sell apples even for the exchange of some bread; but the bread man would not yield.

- Kaladhara** My business is flourishing. I have even bought a balance that weighs gold.
- Jeevabindu** Can we use that balance as well, kaladhara?
- Son of man** Apples and figs cannot be weighed like gold.
- Kaladhara** Nothing is predictable in business. Perhaps a day may come when apples are weighed like gold.
- Jeevabindu** Truth. But I am facing a day when figs are weighed like mangoes. If I cannot sell the figs today itself, I shall be forced to sell them at the rate of manure in due course.
- Kaladhara** Wrong decision. How much did you pay for the figs?
- Jeevabindu** Fifty silver.
- Kaladhara** Whatever figs are unsold this evening may be sold to me at half prize.
- Jeevabindu** With pleasure.
- Kaladhara** And your apples too.
- Son of man** If half prize is ensured.
- Kaladhara** Done. I shall buy parvathaka's mangoes also.
- Son of man** Are you crazy?
- Kaladhara** Business is a craze for me. I am successful too.

Amsumali enters.

Kaladhara Amsumali, what is the latest fashion for servants?

Amsumali Aprons, sir.

Kaladhara I need five aprons this evening itself.

Amsumali Where are your servants, master?

Kaladhara I have asked mallarudra to provide five servants this evening onwards. They have not reported yet.

Amsumali My sewing charge is two silver.

Kaladhara You will get the payment in the evening itself.

A drunkard walks unsteadily from the liquor shop to the temple of varuni opposite to the shops.

Kaladhara The drunkards in shandilya's shop are real nuisances for me. Shandilya himself is a known drunkard too.

SCENE 51

Venue *A liquor shop owned by shandilya.*

Drunkards listen interestingly to the conversation between shandilya and shakthidhara.

There is a serpent charmer among them.

Shakthidhara I have twenty damsels kept in my outhouse. All of them are special. I need variety.

Shandilya Variety! All girls are women.

Shakthidhara A dancer, or a musician, or a princess or a scholar; all are real variety.

Shandilya Are they a variety in bed?

Shakthidhara Do you think that there is no variety in women?

Shandilya There is variety. But it is real challenge. I am haunted by a lass in my dreams.

Shakthidhara Who is she?

Shandilya Who? Ask what?

Shakthidhara What is she?

Shandilya A nun! A girl who has vowed never to marry. She is a real challenge for a man like me.

Shakthidhara Nuns never marry. And even if they marry, they never marry a liquor man. And even if they marry a liquor man, they never marry the good for nothing shandilya. You have no chance at all.

Shandilya Right, shakthidhara. But everybody has a right to dream. I dream nuns with shaven heads.

A drunkard laughs loudly and mocks at him.

Drunkard You may buy a sweeper girl from the slave market of karmasekhara for ten silvers and live with her after shaving her to the shape of your nun.

Shandilya Mock at me. But I am sure that my dream shall come true some day.

Sarpaka Perhaps during this lunar fortnight itself.

Shandilya Why not?

SCENE 52

Venue The apple shop of son of man.

Jeevabindu, son of man and kaladhara receive mallarudra and his men.

Kaladhara Welcome mallarudra, you are already late a few minutes.

Mallarudra We have been at the slave market. A captive nun has arrived there for sale.

Jeevabindu A nun! and a slave too!

Mallarudra Yes. A fairy with fierce eyes and molten cheeks.

Kaladhara Well. Leave the matter. Where are our servants?

Mallarudra These five fine men are your servants.

Amsumali arrives with dress for the servants.

Kaladhara Amsumali, give our servants their dress.

Amsumali supplies the dresses to the servants and helps them to wear it.

Unfortunately four out of the five could not wear them because they were a dwarf man, a tall man, a fat man and a lean man respectively.

The servants look awkward in the uniform.

Amsumali My payment please, masters.

Mallarudra And for my men too.

Kaladhara Do you claim payment to your unfit dress, amsumali?

Amsumali The dresses are proper, only the servants are unfit.

Mallarudra The servants are quite able master. But the dresses were made without taking their measurements.

Kaladhara For which I shall be blamed entirely. Here are your payments.

Amsumali and mallarudra go after receiving their respective payments.

Jeevabindu Disburse the servants at the earliest. I have to tell you something important.

Kaladhara Let the servants carry your excess figs and apples to my shop. They will then peel and skin off them. Let

them eat the pulp themselves. The skin shall be dried up and processed to be sold as medicine for vitality and rejuvenation

A servant What shall we do with the mangoes?

Kaladhara Let them be shallowly cut with skin and pulp and be dried after applying sufficient salt. We can sell it as a cheap medicine for facial beauty. I shall weigh them in my new balance and sell them to earn manifold profit.

As the servants go out to do their assigned work, jeevabindu tells them.

Jeevabindu I have my secret information that a nun is missing from a monastery in asmaka. She is the daughter of a known ascetic. If this slave nun is the nun we are informed of, we have a lot to do here.

SCENE 53

Venue *The temple of the goddess of the city.*

*A grand view of the wealthy temple.
On the left side of the temple agnisikha's priestly shop which is decorated with copper sheets printed with symbolic, coded figures.
On the right side the slave market.
As agnisikha and karmasekhara move from the shop to the market they bow before the temple and talk simultaneously.*

Karmasekhara Revered agnisikha, my business is at a depression these days. I need the blessings of the almighty gods to increase my slave trade. That is why I want to fix a worshipped copper sheet in the waiting rooms of the female slaves.

They enter the slaves' room.

The slaves therein reveal signs of torture and starvation.

There is a nun among them.

Agnisikha performs some rites and fixes a copper sheet at a prominent place.

Agnisikha Your request is accomplished.

Karmasekhara What is your fee?

Agnisikha Five silvers. But I shall be delighted if you give me a slave instead.

Karmasekhara I am a man who never does business at loss even with my own brother. But if you insist, you may have this young nun who never yielded to us even after twenty days of her capture. She is yours.

Agnisikha A nun! No. I would prefer the silver.

Haimavathy enters with a bag of mangoes.

Karmasekhara intervenes.

Haimavathy Pardon me, karmasekhara. We couldn't sell all the mangoes. Can I give the girls some?

Karmasekhara Yes. But be in a hurry.

*Agnisikha and karmasekhara go out.
Haimavathy distributes mangoes to the
female slaves.
When Haimavathy approaches the nun, she
murmurs.*

Haimavathy Are you not the daughter of ananthananda of
asmaka?

The nun nods.

Haimavathy Be brave. You will be rescued soon.

SCENE 54

Venue *Kaladhara's medicine shop.*

*The fat man and the lean man advertise
kaladhara's new products.
A crowd is listening to them.*

Fat man Here is the medicine you dreamed of all your life.

Lean man When you lose your vitality,

Fat man And when you feel older than your spouse,

Lean man And when you want your youthful life back,

Fat man Use our apple skin powder.

Lean man Or our fig dust.

Fat man You will feel the difference the very first day.

Lean man Or the next day to be sure.

*People queue there to buy medicine.
Kaladhara's balance is doing nice service.
An uproar is heard in the street.
Shandilya, shakthidhara and a nun are
followed by a group of drunkards to the
liquor shop.
Kaladhara is upset and directs his servants.*

Kaladhara Keep the business going on. I shall soon be back.

*Kaladhara hurries to the next shop to meet
son of man and jeevabindu.*

Kaladhara The girl was sold earlier than we had expected.

Jeevabindu We should save her.

Son of man All our savings shall be at your disposal for saving her.

Kaladhara Thank you, masters. Your wish will be executed.

*Kaladhara walks to the liquor shop.
The drunkards are enjoying the company of
the nun who sits in a corner.
Kaladhara enters the shop.
Shandilya addresses his friends.*

Shandilya My dream has come true. For my happiness and her health let us drink until we lose our senses.

Shakthidhara Would you charge us today?

Shandilya No. It is free.

Kaladhara It is not fair shakthidhara. Shandilya has already spent a lot for the nun. Somebody else should bear the expenses.

Shandilya Kaladhara is visiting my shop for the first time. Let him be served the best bowl.

Kaladhara Thank you for your generosity. As a token of my gratitude I offer to bear the entire expenditure of your friends for the day.

Shakthidhara Well said, kaladhara, fit for your richness.

Kaladhara drinks the liquor offered to him.

Kaladhara How much did you pay for the nun?

Shandilya Fifty gold coins!

Shakthidhara Lie! He paid only twenty silvers.

Shandilya You have a tendency to humiliate me.

Kaladhara I know that the nun is having all the sixty four auspicious signs. She must worth more than fifty gold coins.

- Sarpaka** Would you buy her for more gold, master kaladhara?
- Kaladhara** Shandilya won't give her away.
- Shakthidhara** Even for hundred golds.
- Sarpaka** Or for two hundred.
- Shandilya** I won't spare her in my entire life.
- Kaladhara** What if I give you five hundred gold coins?
- Shandilya** Five hundred is a temptation. I love her so much. I won't sell her. But if she leaves me willingly, I shall be content with that five hundred golds.
- Kaladhara** Nun, didn't you hear his words. Decide yourself.
- Nun** What difference is there for a slave to have a wealthy or unwealthy master?
- Kaladhara** I have a master who saved me from execution. I am acting under his orders. He loves a certain tribal girl from asmaka.
- Nun** That makes a distinction. I shall come with you.
- Kaladhara** Well! You are unlucky, shandilya. I am giving you one hundred gold coins as advance. I am taking the girl with me for her protection. The balance shall be paid to you tomorrow morning.
- Shandilya** Let it be so.

SCENE 55

Venue *The ruins of the temple of varuni opposite to kaladhara's medicine shop.*

Sarpaka and kutilaka, the assistant of indradatha meet in secret in the night.

Sarpaka The trap has been neatly set. They will jump into it.

Kutilaka These men have a tendency to save others. Their instinct haunts them like a mania. We knew that a chaste nun would be an irresistible temptation for them. So we trapped and sold the daughter of one of our early associates and arranged her sale here. The father of the nun is a rival for our master even now. So this is a double trap.

Sarpaka Is there any change in the execution of the plan?

Kutilaka Nothing. We shall meet again when others are asleep.

They go.

Shakthidhara and shandilya enter the ruins.

Shakthidhara You have lost your dream. Why should you keep awake in the night.

Shandilya I couldn't get the nun in my bed. But I still have the chance to see her in the bed with kaladhara tonight.

Shakthidhara If it is a real variety, I will accompany you.

SCENE 56

Venue *The inner chamber of kaladhara's shop.*

A sleeping place with mats.

A safe is seen in an adjacent wooden cell.

Son of man, jeevabindu, kaladhara and the nun are sitting there.

Son of man has just counted money.

Son of man We have five hundred and sixty golds altogether.

Kaladhara Keep the four hundred in a separate bag.

Jeevabindu As far as I can imagine, those who sold the daughter of ananthananda won't let her live in the company of safer friends. So we should get ready for a flight at any time.

Kaladhara I have engaged the servants to close the shops and to guard the building by keeping awake in the night.

Jeevabindu We depart to asmaka after paying back the dues of shandilya. Until then let us sleep as much as we can.

SCENE 57

Venue *The outside of the shop building.*

Shandiya and shakthidhara are peeping through a window hole.

There is an oil lamp in the room.

The four people inside are sleeping.

Shandilya What are these impotent men doing? They are letting the nun sleep calmly.

Shakthidhara Perhaps they will do something in the midnight.

Shandilya True. If she makes any sound, it will be a disgrace for them. They are waiting until all others fall asleep. They don't know that we are spying on them.

Shakthidhara The time is not up. Let us come back after a while.

They go.

Sarpaka and kutilaka enter.

Sarpaka gets hold of a viper from a basket and allows it to crawl through the window hole towards the nun.

Sarpaka The viper may kill the girl. Let us go away and wait until she is dead.

They go.

The vigilant servants enter.

Fat man Nobody will dare to enter the premises, when we are around here to protect the building.

Lean man Look. There is a hole in the window.

Fat man It is very good for us to ensure that everything is right inside. Have a look.

Lean man looks through the hole.

Lean man Everything is calm there.

Fat man Let me make the assurance double sure.

*The fat man peeps through the hole.
The viper is crawling on to the chest of son
of man.
The fat man is looking at the girl.*

Fat man Everything there is in its position. Let us check the
other side.

SCENE 58

Venue *Inside the chamber.*

*Son of man feels a crawling cold in his chest.
It is the viper.
He opens his eyes.
Son of man gets hold of the snake's head.
The viper squeezes son of man's hand.
Son of man is in agony.*

Son of man Jeevabindu, wake up, everybody.

*They wake up to see the horrible scene.
Kaladhara opens the door and pushes son
of man out.
All the others follow him.
Sarpaka appears from nowhere.
He releases the snake from son of man's
hand.*

Jeevabindu Thank you, sarpaka, for your timely help. Kaladhara, get him some gold as a reward.

Kaladhara goes into the chamber to find the safe empty.

Kaladhara The money is stolen.

Sarpaka Thieves silently enter the home in the unknown hour to steal even your last copper. The wealthy becomes unwealthy within a moment. I have simply done my job. I shall be paid in abundance by the one who sees everything.

Sarpaka rushes out with the viper still in his hand.

The servants enter the chamber.

Kaladhara Go, search everywhere. Get the thieves who have stolen our money.

The servants rush out.

Jeevabindu Shandilya will reclaim the girl tomorrow morning. Once others know that we are no more rich, our business shall be at stake. There may be attempts to murder the girl as well.

Son of man What does the book of bhadrabahu say, my friend?

Jeevabindu To flee, losing everything we have around here.

They feel thunderstruck.

SCENE 59

Venue Open banks of river tapti.

Shandilya and shakthidhara are following the three men and the nun silently.

Shandilya They are searching for a calm place. A boat will be a wonderful place to enjoy with a nun.

Shakthidhara Silence. We can follow them in a boat if necessary.

Sarpaka and kutilaka enter at a distance with open swords in their hands.

Sarpaka They knew much earlier that they had been trapped. They are vigilant now. Our task will be more difficult.

Kutilaka The girl must be killed somehow. If she meets her father, he may be able to unveil the trap set by our master.

Sarpaka Hurry. They have almost reached the river. This is the best time to kill her.

They rush forward to attack the group. Only to be intervened by shakthidhara and shandilya who fear an attack against them. Sarpaka identifies shandilya.

Sarpaka Leave us. We are after the girl.

Shandilya The girl! You will get her only after my death.

*Kutilaka kills shandilya.
Shakthidhara runs away for his life.
The group of four unties a boat, boards on it,
And rows the same upstream.*

Sarpaka They escaped this time.

Kutilaka Never mind. Give news that they have stolen the girl after killing shandilya.

SCENE 60

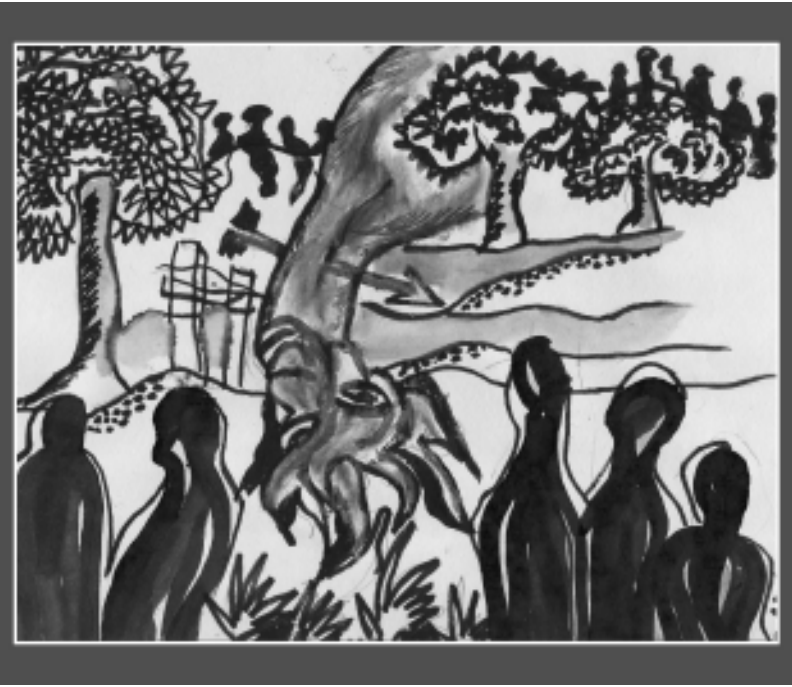
Venue *River tapti.*

*The four refugees row upward on the tapti.
Thousands of cows are grazing on the shores.
Groups of horses and donkeys are also seen.*

Nun I am ayushmathy of asmaka. My father ananthananda is the chief in charge of the large hermitage complex owned by great master dharmabhadra. I was asked to take charge of a monastery at paithan by a chief associate of the great master. But I was charged with conspiracy against the empire before entering the monastery, was caught and sold at paithan. I am so happy to have the prospect of seeing my father again.

Kaladhara We are happy to have saved you.

Nun It was a real nightmare. But I still believe that I would have faced the crisis without the least fear. That is the merit of my education on the path of enlightenment.



SCENE 61 Asmaka, AD 19 January 28

*Venue A hermitage complex at a hilly meadow near
the river mahishmathi.*

*Deer graze calmly in the meadows.
Fawns suck their mothers' milk.
Trained hounds guard the bevy of deer.
Drum beats are heard from far away.
Two hunters armed with bows and arrows
come galloping on horse backs.
Deer run for their lives.
Hounds bark at the horsemen.
The hunters shoot the animals with arrows.
One fawn bleats on getting hurt.*

*Some inmates of the hermitage rush with
bamboo sticks to protect the animals.
Hunters stop their horses.
An inmate speaks to the hunters.*

Inmate Hold your arrows. These animals are owned by the hermitage.

Hunter Who is daring to shout at the officers of the empire?

Inmate No contempt of your office intended. We are appointed to save these innocent animals. Hunting is not allowed here.

Hunter Under whose orders?

Inmate By orders of our master ananthananda.

Hunter There is imperial notification allowing hunting of wild animals on remittance of prescribed fees.

Inmate These are tamed animals grown for generations.

Hunter No. Deer are wild animals and public property.

Inmate But they are private here.

Hunter Are you attempting to overthrow the empire?

Inmate No. We are tax payers.

Hunter Do you have licence to raise these animals?

Inmate We do.

Hunter Well. We have come this far. Let us kill one or two deer and go back

Inmate No animal killing is allowed in this hermitage premises.

Hunter What is the purpose of growing animals without killing and eating them?

Inmate We promote peace and harmony among all living beings. It is a basic principle of co-existence.

Hunter Absurd!

Ayushmathy and her three friends are climbing the hill.

The hunters are attempting another raid.

The inmates prevent the hunters.

Ayushmathy runs to the scene of conflict and speaks to the inmates.

Her friends follow her.

Ayushmathy Keep back. Bamboo sticks won't prevent arrows from piercing flesh. But they never hurt the soul.

The inmates fall at her feet.

The hunters wonder at the sight.

Jeevabindu take the wounded fawn in his hand and looks it after.

The fawn bleats again.

Hunter Is this diamond of a girl also a private property of the hermitage?

Ayushmathy Hold your tongue. I am the heiress of the land where you have dared to stamp on your impudent feet. Get out of this sacred land.

*The hunters ride away.
The inmates carry ayushmati and her friends
on their shoulders,
To be greeted by ananthananda, the ascetic
and great master dharmabhadra
accompanied by indradatha.*

Ayushmathy Greetings, my father. Have the honour of meeting jeevabindu, son of man and kaladhara who rescued my person and honour.

Ananthananda Long live, my daughter. Welcome young men. I have word that sarpaka and kutilaka have been arrested, but your gold could not be recovered.

Dharmabhadra Son of man and jeevabindu have been my servants at godavari. They have accomplished great tasks for me. We have heard about kaladhara too.

Son of man Great master, bless us all.

*They kneel before dharmabhadra and
receive his blessings.*

Dharmabhadra Meet indradatha, one of my intimate disciples.

- Indradatha** Thank you for saving ayushmathy. The situation in paithan is under control now. We have decided to send her back to the monastery at paithan.
- Ayushmathy** Is it true, father?
- Ananthananda** True.
- Ayushmathy** I do not fear paithan. I have got three new great friends. I feel that I shall be happy and secure in their company, and I know that nothing is eternal. Some day I shall lose them too. Still I request that I may be allowed to live with them for a while. I shall return back one day.
- Ananthananda** You are a nun. You are free to decide yourself.
- Indradatha** She is a woman in flesh.
- Dharmabhadra** We all are weak in flesh. But our will will decide our destiny. There is not such a thing as male will and female will.
- Jeevabindu** We shall leave here tomorrow.
- Ananthananda** You are free men.
- Dharmabhadra** What arrangements shall we do for you?
- Ayushmathy** We need a fishing boat on the river mahanadi with all necessary equipments.
- Dharmabhadra** Your request is granted. We shall meet at kalinga.



SCENE 62 Mahanadi, AD 19 February 15

Venue A fishing boat on the river mahanadi.

*Ayushmathy teaches son of man fishing.
Kaladhara is appraising his performance.
Jeevabindu views the wild nature around.*

Ayushmathy The depth of the river and the presence of plenty of fishes can be assessed by the colour of the water. Throw your fishnet, son of man, to that dark blue area.

*Son of man throws the fishnet to the area
pointed out by ayushmathy.
He settles the net slowly and pulls it up.*

Ayushmathy A very good catch indeed!

Kaladhara Son of man, some of the fishes you catch are not good. Put the good fishes alone in the basket and throw the others away.

Ayushmathy You seem to be a born fisherman. But you should learn more.

Son of man My fatherland is situated at the banks of a lake. Many people there make a living by fishing. I have visited there only once in my entire life. I was twelve years then.

Son of man walks towards jeevabindu.

Ayushmathy I know that kaladhara is an artist. Jeevabindu is a philosopher. But what is son of man?

Kaladhara He is everything. He can do anything.

Ayushmathy Do not ridicule him.

Kaladhara I am telling the truth.

Ayushmathy You do not stick on anything. Son of man, tell me your ambition?

*As jeevabindu comes to ayushmathy,
He sees dying fishes.*

Jeevabindu I can't see these beings dying. Son of man is on a mission.

Ayushmathy A mission?

Son of man Yes. Exactly on the third full moon day of the enlightened one hereafter, a bodhisattva shall be anointed at manasarovara of the himalayas. I must deliver him the anointment oil. It is with me.

Ayushmathy Let me see it.

*Son of man goes in to take the bottle and shows them the anointment oil.
He puts it back safely.*

Ayushmathy Shall all of us come with you?

Jeevabindu One should invent one's own path of enlightenment.

Kaladhara So?

Jeevabindu Destiny shall separate us.

Ayushmathy But our will power shall carry us to the himalayas.

Kaladhara We may strive to attain our destination.

Ayushmathy stretches her hand on which the three men offer their hands for a declaration.

Everybody We shall meet at manasarovara at the expected time.

A city is seen at a distance as an auspicious omen.

SCENE 63

Venue A town on the riverside.

*The four friends tie their boat at the harbour.
Ayushmathy descends from the boat and leads
the way carrying a basketful of fresh fish.
They climb the rock paved steps to the town.
Royal priest receives them.
A lunatic is detained by his guards.*

Royal priest Welcome to the city, ayushmathy. Welcome wise men. You are royal guests here.

Ayushmathy Kindly receive our earnings of the day.

Royal priest We are honoured.

*The royal priest receives the basket of fishes.
The lunatic laughs and shouts loudly.*

Lunatic Royal priest is mad! Doing rites with river fish! The fisherwoman is eccentric. Her crazy assistants are the worst of the kind.

Royal priest gives orders to the guards.

Royal priest Shut the mouth of that mad man.

Jeevabindu A man blaming a mad man as a mad man is a mad man.

Royal priest Rightly said. Sickness must be viewed pitifully

SCENE 64

Venue *A bedrock on a hill on the riverside.*

The four friends and royal priest are on discussion.

Royal priest His highness, the king knows that you are on a long journey. However he has deputed me to let you know his intention to get a temple of the enlightened one constructed here by kaladhara. This is not an order, but an expression of the royal desire.

Ayushmathy Kaladhara is a great sculptor. The king is a promoter of arts. But we are on a purposeful journey. Kindly inform the king that we shall fulfill his desire when we are back.

Kaladhara Why this commitment, ayushmathy? I am not worthy of doing the temple of the enlightened one. However I may carve his footprints on this bedrock, if the king orders so. He may build a rest house here for the travelers. We may inscribe the teachings of the blessed one on its walls. I may prepare a sketch for the same. Let the architects construct it.

Royal priest I shall inform his highness your opinion.

SCENE 65

Venue *The bedrock where footprints are carved.*

Kaladhara is doing the final touching.

*His friends assist him in his work.
The footprints are bigger than normal size.*

Ayushmathy The enlightened one was an ordinary man. Why did you make his footprints in a monster's size?

Kaladhara According to the art of sculpting great men must have great footprints.

*They laugh.
Royal priest arrives.*

Kaladhara The work of the footprints is completed. Did the king approve my sketches of the rest house?

Royal priest His highness has expressed his satisfaction. You shall be rewarded for your great work.

Ayushmathy We are already rewarded by your words. We plan to go to kalinga tomorrow morning.

Royal priest The news shall be conveyed to his highness.

Royal priest goes.

Kaladhara Do you want to catch any more big fishes from the river, ayushmathy?

Ayushmathy There are only a few days for the commencement of the festival of spring at kanchanapura of kalinga. This unique festival is the last word in the expression of feminine freedom.



SCENE 66 Kalinga, AD 19 March 07

Venue A castle near a state highway at kanchanapura of kalinga.

Indradatha and some dignitaries are seated on the balcony of the first floor of the castle. A crowd of colourfully dressed girls and the ladies of the household of the dignitaries are assembled in the front yard of the castle. Many less important women are assembled at the nearby state highway. It is an early morning of the later winter. Indradatha stands up and addresses the women in the front yard in a loud voice.

Indradatha Our nation has been celebrating the festival of spring for centuries. Though known as the festival of spring, different cities celebrate this festival on different seasons according to their climatic conditions. Kanchanapura celebrates it when the winter gives away to its successor. Men will withdraw this day from the streets. Women shall renounce their kitchen to come out to own the streets. The masculine mind shall appreciate the feminine expressions of liberty this day. Thus we declare the commencement of the festival of spring of the town and withdraw ourselves from the streets. Women are free this day to do anything with any male who enters the streets of the city before the sun sets.

Indradatha takes his seat.

Women produce a great uproar as a signal of taking over the streets.

Long before ayushmathy and her friends reached the castle premises, the festival of spring had commenced.

A labourer from a nearby hut rushes into the street to greet the three men.

Labourer Stay out of the street. It is dangerous to stay outdoors. Come into my house.

Ayushmathy Do as he says. I shall be back only in the evening.

Ayushmati disappears in the crowd of women. The labourer receives them in his cow dung besmeared single room hut.

*He offers them grass mats to sit on.
On the front yard of the castle, a colourful
folk dance is being performed.
Ball games, horse riding, light and classical
music, dance and acting, drawing, painting,
sculpting and lots of other feminine flair,
skill and adventure are performed there at
large scale.
The dignitaries at the balcony enjoy the
beauty and performance of the women.
The people in the huts are also viewing the
women in the streets.
A dignitary in the balcony tells his opinion.*

Dignitary Having fun at the spring festival is an experience. It is so erotic.

*The people in the hut see less attractive
women in their street.
Jeevabindu asks the labourer.*

Jeevabindu Who among them is your wife?

Labourer She is not there. The festival of spring is a festival of liberty of women. It is true. But there is inequality among women in the festival. See the front yard of the castle. The rich and the artistic women alone are performing there. Those who are socially just below them hold the next prominent places. Women like my wife do not have fat and shining bodies or colourful dress to wear on. They move to unimportant places with their friends to celebrate their

day of liberty. Liberty for one day! We are just like slaves all the other days. Shame and poverty never depart us. I can only hope that my dear spouse is happy somewhere in this crowd.

Jeevabindu Just like righteousness, the ways of liberty also are very complex. Without change in the physical surroundings of a normal individual, liberty shall remain for ever utopian. Before attaining liberty, the sense of inequality should disappear.

A distant song is heard.

A chorus of women repeats the lines.

The words are simple, the melody has a steady rhythm and the voices are energetic.

The number of persons in the chorus increases.

Ayushmathy is leading a procession of women in the city.

As the procession reaches the highway near the castle premises, artistic performances at the front yard are interrupted.

Indradatha wonders to see ayushmathy there.

Many women join the procession.

When the procession has passed the castle premises, the front yard of the castle is empty.

Indradatha and the dignitaries are uneasy.

Guards attend them.

Indradatha Guard, ask the leader of the procession ayushmathy to meet me at the balcony.

A Guard goes out to the street,

*Only to be seen by a group of women at the rear of the procession,
Who tear the guard's dresses and manhandle him until he is thrown into the gutter of the street.
When jeevabindu sees the procession as it reaches in front of the hut, he exclaims.*

Jeevabindu I was wrong. I had never thought that liberty and equality were so simple and spontaneous. All the men in the world would not have been able to teach me that lesson.

*Kaladhara cannot resist his temptation to congratulate ayushmathy.
He runs into the street to meet her.
Some infuriated women get hold of him.
Ayushmathy intervenes.*

Ayushmathy Pardon him. He is my brother.

Woman Pardon? It is against the rule of the day.

Ayushmathy We shall uphold the rules. We do not hate our men. Let them know that we are no more monsters. Bring colours, colour him and mock at him.

Woman Great idea.

*They throw colour powders at him.
All are in a friendly and celebrating mood.
Kaladhara laughs too.*

Jeevabindu and son of man run to the crowd followed by the labourer.

He finds his wife in the crowd.

She throws colours on him.

The procession turns out into a festival of colours.

Men run into the street with available colours to hand over the same to the women and to get painted instead.

It is a festival of mirth and joy.

Suddenly son of man finds that all women in the procession are having bindis on their foreheads.

He is some yards away from ayushmathy.

He asks her a question loudly and she answers him more loudly.

Son of man Ayushmathy, why do all you women have bindis on your foreheads today?

Ayushmathy Bindi is a symbol of happiness and celebration. But people do not understand that. Today is our day of celebration. So, all of us decorate ourselves with bindis. If you are happy enough, you may have a bindi too.

Son of man runs forward with dancing steps towards ayushmathy.

Ayushmathy takes some colour and puts a bindi on his forehead.

The ladies shower colours on him.

SCENE 67

Venue *A road near an agricultural land with a huge exposed basaltic rock formation.*

*The four friends travel in a bullock cart.
The sky and the clouds form a background
for the land and the rock formation.
The bullocks and the cart man are very tired.*

Cart man The town is five minutes away from here. These farm lands are mostly owned by poor farmers. It is very difficult for them to cultivate here due to the presence of large blocks of rocks. There is a ruined temple of madira, the goddess of sex. It was a great temple two centuries ago.

Jeevabindu Let us rest there for a while.

Cart man The travelers won't go to the temple there. It is a cursed place. Let us sit at the rock formation and have our food. A spring also originates from there.

Son of man As you wish.

Cart man The bullocks need some grazing. Let them rest too.

*They get down from the cart.
The bullocks are freed.
Kaladhara is deeply attracted by the land
and inspects every inch of it in detail.
The others drink water from the spring.
They start cooking.*

Jeevabindu What are you looking for, kaladhara? Is there any treasure buried in the land?

Kaladhara There is a treasure here which only an artist can dig and own. These rocks themselves are the treasure. They are the best basaltic bedrocks available in the country for stone carving. I cannot resist my temptation to buy this land.

Son of man Are we rich enough?

Kaladhara I don't care the money. The colourful festival of the spring has been a real inspiration for the artist inside me. I dream the different postures of the beautiful girls who have danced there. I can't help sculpting some of them. Now that I have found the exact location with abundance of raw stone, I must buy this land selling everything I own. I wish to start a school of sculpture here.

Jeevabindu We may sell all our possessions to buy the land.

Ayushmathy Remember. We have a mission.

Kaladhara We have years before us for the mission. I want you here to inspire me. You are inevitable.

Ayushmathy To serve you as your assistant? Or as a sculptress?

Kaladhara And as a model too.

*She smiles.
And the laughter spreads.*

SCENE 68

Venue *The ruined temple of the goddess madira.*

Son of man and jeevabindu inspect the temple.

Jeevabindu sits opposite to the idol of madira.

Jeevabindu It is long since I have meditated in solitude. I immersed my self in continuous activity for months. I feel as if I should meditate. Let me close my eyes to open my inner eye.

Jeevabindu starts meditation.

Son of man Wonderful man! Let me imitate him.

Son of man sits in the meditation posture.

SCENE 69

Venue *The sculpture school of kaladhara.*

Kaladrara and ayushmathy give directions to the workers and the students.

Uncompleted feminine sculptures are being carved on stone.

The land has become a spot of attraction.

Son of man enters alone.

Ayushmathy runs towards him.

Ayushmathy Where is jeevabindu?

Son of man He is meditating in solitude.

Kaladara Where?

Son of man In the ruined temple of madira.

Worker It is dangerous there. Men and women of all sinful activities assemble there on all friday evenings for the rites of their cult. Today is friday.

Ayushmathy Let us go and save him.

Worker Only if he doesn't come back in time.

Kaladara Get ready for a fight if necessary. Ayushmathy may stay here.

Ayushmathy No. I shall lead you there.

SCENE 70

Venue *The ruined temple of the goddess madira.*

*Jeevabindu continues his meditation.
A large group of men and women enters the
premises with cooked meat and liquor.
They find an unwanted person there.
Jeevabindu meditates.
The group makes a fearful roar to frighten
the meditating man.
No response from him.
The leader of the group shouts.*

Leader Get out of here, you swine.

*The group shouts vulgarly at jeevabindu.
Jeevabindu's eyes remain closed.
Somebody slaps him on his cheeks.
Others spit on him.
A woman tears his upper cloth.
Another kisses him.
They all laugh at him.
Jeevabindu meditates.*

Leader The rogue must be killed at once.

Woman No. Let us disgrace him to nudity first.

*They remove all his clothes.
Jeevabindu is still on meditation.
The indifference of the naked man even after
molestation makes the group leader crazy.
He kicks the man shouting.*

Leader Kill that bastard.

*As the group jumps on him, they are
interrupted by an unexpected laughter.
A loud laughter from the meditating man.
Jeevabindu stands up with red hot fierce eyes.*

Jeevabindu I am the untouchable eternal flame of the soul, giving out my heat into the air that keeps all beings living.

He laughs again.

*Suddenly the air gets hot.
The fearful group has a vision that the naked
man is standing inside a column of fire.
The leader cries loudly.*

Leader Kneel before the great man for his mercy.

*All of them prostrate before the naked man.
As the weak is subdued by the strong, they
worship him with all reverence.
Jeevabindu meditates again in the standing
posture with the group still lying down.
Ayushmathy, kaladhara, son of man and
their men enter with sticks in their hands.
They are astonished to see jeevabindu naked.
Ayushmathy takes out her shawl to offer him.*

Ayushmathy Jeevabindu, take this shawl.

He opens his eyes.

Jeevabindu I am not jeevabindu any more. I shall be the flame of the soul hereafter. I have renounced my dress too. I am free from all bondages. I have only my life to lose any more. I am going to manasasarovara. I shall wait for you there. But I promise that if you are in real need, I shall be there to help you.

He walks towards the northern forest.

Son of man I had promised to his father that I would not depart

him. My mind says that he shall visit gaya. I am following him to gaya.

Ayushmathy Do not worry. It is not you who departed him. He gave up on the ways of the world. Come back. We shall arrange you a donkey and a few possessions for your journey to gaya. Kaladhara and I shall follow you when the school is handed over to safe hands.

SCENE 71

Venue A trade route from kanchanapura to gaya.

Son of man and two merchants travel on donkeys. Some donkeys carry their goods. Two roads diverge at a junction.

Son of man Which road leads us to gaya?

Merchant Both roads. The one to the left is narrow and dangerous, but the shortest. The right one is the state highway which is easy to travel. But it is long. However we prefer the safer road.

Son of man I am in a hurry. I should reach gaya at the earliest.

Merchant The shortest distance does not necessarily mean the least time. If you stick on the narrow way, I may give you an advice. Gaya is a great destination. Beware! All the great destinations are possessed by robbers and murderers. They will cheat you.

Son of man takes the narrow left road.

SCENE 72

Venue *A barren land with huge rock projections on one side of the road to gaya.*

*Two robbers hide in the shadows of the rocks.
Jeemoothaka, the robber talks with his
accomplice jayasheela.*

Jeemoothaka The caravans have abandoned this route. Robbery is no more a profitable business here.

Jayasheela Lootings committed by our former leader were very cruel. He killed many merchants. So they diverted their route, and we were put to starvation. The policy of our new leader is to rob everything except life.

Jeemoothaka What is the use of a policy without activity? Let us get a victim first.

Jayasheela There he comes.

*Son of man comes on his donkey.
The donkey is very tired.
The robbers attack and rob him.
Son of man is badly wounded, bleeds severely
and falls unconscious.
The bottle of anointment oil falls down and
is found by jayasheela*

Jayasheela We shall sell this greek bottle to the merchant from gandhara. The man is lucky. Our policy has saved him.

SCENE 73

Venue *The barren land with huge rock projections.*

The sun rises.

Son of man opens his eyes.

As he tries to move he cries with severe pain.

A caravan with armed men comes that way.

Son of man weeps in agony when he crawls.

The merchants see him, but neglect him.

Son of man begs for water.

But no response from the moving caravan.

The sun has gone up.

It is getting hot and son of man is thirsty.

*He sees indradatha along with some friends
galloping on horse through the road.*

Indradatha recognizes him too.

Indradatha This man has troubled me a lot. Let him face his fate.

Son of man lifts his hand requesting for help.

But the horsemen ride on leaving him alone.

*Son of man tries to stand on his foot, but falls
unconscious again on the lonely road.*

The rock projections and the barren land.

*As the great master dharmabhadra comes
slowly on a horse, he sees the tragic spectacle.*

*He dismounts the horse, helps the wounded
man and recognizes son of man.*

*He takes out his water bag to apply some
water on son of man's face.*

*Son of man opens his eyes.
Dharmabhadra helps son of man to stand up
and to mount on his horse.
He leads the horse with the man on it in
search of a safer place.
Dharmabhadra and the horse walk.
The sun gets high up.
They reach another place with exposed
boulders to be again attacked by
jeemoothaka and jayasheela.
Son of man screams in fright.*

Dharmabhadra Do not fear, my son. I shall show you the power of our ancient culture.

The robbers make a roar and come closer.

Dharmabhadra Peace!

The robbers stand motionless.

Dharmabhadra I am the great master dharmabhadra. I wish to give you my horse and possessions as a charitable gift. Would you receive it from me?

Jayasheela With pleasure.

Dharmabhadra Here is the water.

*He pours the water on their hands as well as
his, preparing them for the rite.
The robbers are as calm as sheep.*

Dharmabhadra Let the great universe witness my utterance. I hand over you my horse and my possessions on it as charity. I shall have no claims over them hereafter.

Robbers We hereby receive the gift with gratitude. The great master shall have no liability on account of this gift.

Dharmabhadra The horse is yours now. I do not have any possessions either. But the man on the horseback is my son. Will you be kind enough to carry him to a safer place?

Jayasheela We shall carry him to the house of swarnakethu, the wealthiest land lord around here.

Dharmabhadra Do your best.

*A hiking physician comes across them.
Dharmabhadra recognizes him as charaka.*

Dharmabhadra Greetings, grand physician charaka. You have arrived at the right time. Here is a patient for you.

Charaka Great master dharmabhadra, it is a pleasure to meet you. But I am in a hurry to attend a very serious patient. Let me have a look at the wounded man.

He examines son of man, walks to the nearest bushes, takes some herbs and makes a paste and applies it on his wounds.

Charaka Where do you plan to stay?

Dharmabhadra At the house of swarnakethu, the landlord.

Charaka I shall meet you there tomorrow afternoon.

*Grand physician charaka goes away.
The robbers carry son of man on horse back
to the gate house of swarnakethu.
Dharmabhadra follows them.*

Jayasheela We cannot enter the house in day light. We are robbers.

The robbers gallop away.

SCENE 74

Venue *The house of swarnakethu.*

*The gate house of swarnakethu opens.
Guards under the leadership of vasumathy
interrogate dharmabhadra.*

Vasumathy Who are you?

Dharmabhadra Two helpless men seeking the help of your master.

Vasumathy Who were the people on horses?

Dharmabhadra Their names are jeemoothaka and jayasheela.

Vasumathy thinks it over.

Vasumathy Let our master decide. He is not usually angry when having food. Come.

*Guards lead the two men into the inner yard.
Son of man is supported by dharmabhadra.
The evening has arrived.
On the sit out of the huge house, a fat and
red cheeked aristocrat named swarnakethu
sits at a large dining table.
He is having his early supper.
Dogs sit on the floor for left over food.
He sees the wounded man.
Swarnakethu feels happiness.*

Swarnakethu Come. Come. Sit.

*When dharmabhadra tries to seat son of man
on a chair swarnakethu gets angry.*

Swarnakethu Beggars sitting with me! Sit on the floor with the dogs.

Son of man speaks painfully.

Son of man This is the great master...

Dharmabhadra interrupts.

Dharmabhadra This is great, master swarnakethu.

*They sit on the floor with the dogs.
The dogs wag their tail.
Dharmabhadra pats them.*

Swarnakethu Very nice dogs indeed!

Dharmabhadra My son is wounded. Have mercy on him.

Son of man is in tears when he sees his great master begging for his sake.

Swarnakethu What do you want?

Dharmabhadra Give him something to eat and drink. Give shelter to us for some days.

Swarnakethu Some days? No.

*He throws some bones to the dogs.
They clash for it.
He throws a piece of meat to dharmabhadra.
The great master catches it.
Son of man weeps.*

Dharmabhadra Do not lose your heart, my son. Eat this.

*Son of man eats it.
Swarnakethu is having his soup.*

Dharmabhadra Some soup for my son too, master.

*Swarnakethu pours some soup into the dogs' pan and dharmabhadra tastes it and hands it over to son of man who drinks it.
It cannot quench his thirst.
Swarnakethu watches him with satisfaction.*

Son of man Some more please.

Swarnakethu I am very generous. Have some more.

*He pours some more soup into the pan.
A dog gently licks the wounds.
Son of man feels some relief from pain.*

Swarnakethu I like you, father and son. I have finished my supper. The left over food is yours. You may stay here this night in some empty kennels.

*Dharmabhadra takes the left over food
down to the floor and feeds son of man.*

Swarnakethu Tomorrow my servants will reap and thresh the wheat. You should help them old man.

*The sun sets completely.
Swarnakethu goes into the house and the
guards attend their duties, leaving the two
men and the dogs all alone.*

SCENE 75

Venue *The inner yard of the house of swarnakethu.*

*Excellent threshing activity is taking place.
The yield is very heavy and wheat is
accumulated in the barn house.
The heaps of wheat go high up.
Swarnakethu is very happy.
He sees dharmabhadra and son of man
keeping away from the agricultural activities.*

He moves to a guard at the gate house.

Swarnakethu Guard, bring that old man here.

The order is carried out.

Swarnakethu Old man, those who eat from my plate should work for me as well. Help the workers in binding the straw.

Dharmabhadra helps the workers.

A knock at the door of the gate house.

Charaka enters when the door is opened.

He is angry when he sees dharmabhadra working with the workers.

He faces swarnakethu.

Charaka This man is responsible for the recent development in the field of agriculture. Stop working with him.

Swarnakethu This beggar eats my wheat. He should work for me. I have a high yield this year.

Charaka So?

Swarnakethu I should collect the wheat in my barn house before rain comes. I must sell them when the prices are up.

Charaka Fool. You shall die much before that.

Swarnakethu Who are you?

Charaka I am charaka, the chief of the establishment of the hiking physicians.

He moves to a guard at the gate house.

Swarnakethu Guard, bring that old man here.

The order is carried out.

Swarnakethu Old man, those who eat from my plate should work for me as well. Help the workers in binding the straw.

Dharmabhadra helps the workers.

A knock at the door of the gate house.

Charaka enters when the door is opened.

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Charaka Fool. You shall die much before that.

Swarnakethu Who are you?

Charaka I am charaka, the chief of the establishment of the hiking physicians.

Swarnakethu Then get out of my house with that old rogue and the wounded youngster.

They are driven out of the house.

The sky suddenly turns dark.

They hurry towards a large banyan tree there.

The whirlwind blows.

It is the starting of the black stone rain.

The three men hide under the branches and roots of the banyan tree.

The roof of the house of swarnakethu is heavily damaged by stone rain over it.

Water also is pouring heavily.

The barn house is damaged and the wheat gets wet and damaged.

Swarnakethu cannot endure the loss.

He feels chest pain and falls down.

A lament of the workers is heard.

The three men are under the shelter of the banyan tree.

Charaka He must have died. I had noticed all the symptoms of a severe massive heart attack in swarnakethu. A physician should quit the place where treatment is fruitless. That is why we left the place without any argument.

Dharmabhadra Swarnakethu was good enough to give us food and shelter until your arrival. My son is in a hurry to reach gaya. He must recover at the earliest.

Charaka I shall treat him at my residence.

SCENE 76

Venue *The residence cum dispensary complex of charaka, the head of the hiking physicians.*

In one cottage son of man is undergoing an oil anointment treatment.

Son of man sees treatments for many patients suffering from numerous diseases.

Treatments for the blind, the lunatic, the leper, the mentally depressed, the physically disabled, those with defective speech and other physically, socially and mentally ill.

He sees dharmabhadra and charaka in the large garden of medicinal plants.

Charaka plucks leaves from the shrubs collects roots and flowers and puts them in boiling oil after cutting them into pieces.

The oil so prepared is cooled and collected. He fetches it in a pan to son of man and applies it on his wounds telling him.

Charaka You can travel by next week. Until then you may learn our system of medicine.

Son of man I have lost my anointment oil. Jeevabindu must have left gaya by this time. It is no use going there now.

Dharmabhadra Don't lose your heart, my son. Word has been received that assistance shall be provided to us from gaya. Whatever lost shall be found at somewhere else. It is the human destiny.



SCENE 77 Gaya, AD 19
The full moon day of the enlightened one

Venue The city of gaya.

Dharmabhadra and son of man enter the city of gaya in an evening on a chariot ridden by three black horses.

Gaya is a city of peepul trees.

Under each peepul tree spiritual people practice their skills.

Some practice different yogic postures.

Others practice the control of breathing, meditation, asceticism, martial arts, chanting hymns, teaching holy scripture etc.

*Some sing religious songs.
Some sit back and sleep.
Some smoke ganja and other narcotic drugs.
Some drink liquor.
Some simply beg.
But there is a very old peepul tree where
nobody dares to go.
Dharmabhadra speaks with the charioteer.*

Dharmabhadra Stop the chariot. This is a holy place. We shall walk and stay in a house where we are received. Tell them not to expect us today in the monastery. You may go.

*They dismount and the chariot goes away.
They walk to the old peepul tree.
The peepul seems mystic in the dusk.*

Dharmabhadra The enlightened one never disclosed which peepul tree it was. He did not give much importance to the tree. He only said that he had the enlightenment while sitting under a peepul tree. His direct disciples had the enlightened one himself with them. So they didn't care about the tree. But when he was no more, people wanted symbols. The tree became the most potent symbol. Many of his disciples identified different peepul trees as the original one. Centuries have elapsed after his enlightenment. The popular belief is that this is the tree. Nobody really knows the truth. Still they look this tree with awe and reverence. Nobody dares to go near it.

Son of man What is enlightenment?

Dharmabhadra Come. Let us sit here for a while

They sit under the peepul tree.

Dharmabhadra Close your eyes.

They close their eyes.

Dharmabhadra A man with all the particles of his body thirsty for the true knowledge strives restlessly for achieving it. He learned every known science abundantly, faced experiences unendurable by ordinary men, framed numerous hypotheses for unifying his understanding, and finally found that something was lacking in his comprehension. He could not sleep well, eat well or think well. Still he sat under that tree for many days and after framing many propositions, a flash of thought passed through him, and alas, everything was then clear for him as in daylight. He knew what the universal truth of sorrow was, and the ways to eradicate it as well. He decided to teach this knowledge to the people around him, because he knew that he was the one and only enlightened one of the time. Do you understand my son?

Son of man visualizes a handsome man sitting under a peepul tree experiencing all the above phenomena.

When they do open their eyes, they have no question to be asked or answer to be given.

Son of man The sun has set again. We need some more light.

*They walk towards the town.
People greet them with pleasure.
They know the great master dharmabhadra
and his disciple son of man.
In front of the threshold of every house, oil
lamps with many flames glitter.
It is a traditional symbol of the people to
welcome a guest into the home.
Citizens praise them.
Many people follow them.
The city is celebrating their arrival as a
festival of the lamps.
Lamps glitter everywhere in the street.
People welcome them into their homes.
Dharmabhadra and son of man are humble.
They return people's greetings.
They still walk through the street.
Children come running towards them.
They bless the children.
They enter into a hut at the farther end of
the street where they are heartily welcomed.*

Dharmabhadra I must go to our headquarters at kurukshethra early tomorrow morning. When you come there you must meet me and claim your inheritance. You can't help coming. It is your destiny.

Indradatha enters the hut.

Indradatha My greetings, great master. We had expected you at the monastery.

Dharmabhadra My present disposition prevents me from entering the monastery.

Indradatha feels uneasy.

Dharmabhadra Meet my new disciple son of man. My son, indradatha will show you the important places here and also make arrangements for your education on the initiation rites at kusumapura.

Indradatha feels irritation at the proposal.

Indradatha Great master calls you “my son”. Are you his son?

Son of man I am son of man. Great master is a man. So I am his son.

Indradatha Is he your father?

Son of man He is not.

Indradatha Are you a fatherless son then?

Son of man I am an orphan. Ever since I am born, I have felt the need of a father. There should be one. If there isn’t any, I should find one.

Dharmabhadra This is too much. If I address him as my son, I am his father as well. Son of man, you should call me father hereafter. This is an order.

Indradatha goes out of the hut.



SCENE 78 Kusumapura, AD 19 June 20

Venue The great school of mathematics at kusumapura established by jinaswathy.

Indradatha and son of man accompanny jinaswathy, the head of the school to see the functioning of the school.

Mathematics, magical arts, sorcery, psychomagical treatment, architecture, medicine, grammar, the six philosophies etc are some of the subjects taught there.

Some students practice the typical rope climbing magic and some walk over water.

Some students practice the holy sacrifices.

*As the three men pass through the corridors,
They receive great respect from the teachers
and students.
They enter into the chamber of jinaswathy.*

Jinaswathy Son on man, what do you believe in?

Son of man I do not have any belief.

Jinaswathy Whom do you worship?

Son of man I worship all the living and nonliving beings.

Jinaswathy What do you hate the most?

Son of man I know only to love.

Jinaswathy Whom do you love?

Son of man My friends and neighbours.

Jinaswathy No direct answer. Well! If you enter into the room of a young girl when she is naked, what will you do?

Son of man I shall console her.

Jinaswathy Son of man is not firm in detachment. Let us show him the way of the enlightened one. Let him wear rags and beg with us.

Indradatha Tomorrow, we shall beg at the misty lands beyond the ganges. It is far away from here.

SCENE 79

Venue *A misty land beyond the ganges.*

*Indradatha, jinaswathy and son of man beg
in the misty lands.*

It is very cold out there.

There are very few houses there.

As they reach a rich house, the three chant.

The Three I follow the path of the enlightened one.
I follow the path of righteousness.
I follow the path of association.

They are received warmly in the house.

*Jinaswathy is gifted with money gold and
sweet and fragrant food.*

*When the host offers the same to the other
two men, indradatha refuses.*

Indradatha Only one person receives alms from one house a day.

*Son of man follows indradatha to a remote
place where there is only one house.*

*Indradatha is received there and offered
food and money.*

*Son of man goes out alone and walks towards
the north to find no houses there.*

*The mist is so thick that nothing can be seen
at a distance.*

*Finally he finds a hut with a mango tree in
front of it.*

*He chants the three lined hymn.
A sweet female sound is heard from within.*

Voice Pardon me. I cannot come out and give you gifts. I am naked. My only dress is put for drying outside. Please come in and accept this virgin's gift.

Son of man Sacred virgin, I shall receive your gift.

Son of man enters the hut and sees her.

Susheela I am susheela. My parents were killed in the last black stone rain. I am alone here. I have not cooked anything here for days. My only food is mangoes from that tree outside. These mangoes are very sweet. Kindly eat them.

Son of man receives the mangoes.

Son of man Sacred virgin, have you had any?

Susheela No. The tree will give us as many mangoes as we need. You may take some mangoes with you for your next meal.

Son of man eats some mangoes and keeps some for his next meal.

Susheela Where are you going, revered one?

Son of man I am going to visit the places where the enlightened one lived as a boy.

*Susheela goes out and comes back wearing
her wet dress.*

*Son of man comes out and walks towards the
mountains.*

Susheela talks and walks with him.

*As they mount a huge mountain, they know
that she is following him.*

There is no possibility of returning back.

Son of man So we are together.

She smiles as they walk.

They walk through forests,

Through valleys covered with flowers,

Across rills with ice cold water,

And through the banks of lakes and ponds.

They calmly walk in the day.

They shelter below the rocks at night.

They even walk in the moonlight.

*They collect fruits from the trees to eat and
carry them for the next meal.*

They conquer huge mountains together.

*They are approaching the sacred land of the
enlightened one.*

They reach a highway at last.

The highway to kapilavasthu.

The sun is up.

They stop in the shade of a giant tree.

They are wearing rags.

They have heavily exerted their body.

They feel hungry.

Susheela I am hungry.

Son of man We have nothing to eat except three apples.

He hands them over to her.

They see a chariot driven by seven horses coming towards them.

Susheela That must be a king, a prince or a lord. If we beg him, he will give us something precious.

They stand there with their hands folded.

The chariot stops before them.

Lord dismounts the chariot and extends his open hands towards them.

Lord Give me something. I am hungry.

Susheela gives lord the three apples.

Lord looks for a place to sit on.

Susheela puts a part of her dress on the floor.

Lord sits on it.

He eats the apples.

Lord Very sweet apples. The breeze is very tempting. Let me sleep for a while.

Susheela lets her lap as a pillow for the lord.

Lord sleeps peacefully on her lap.

Son of man sleeps on the gravelly ground.

The girl keeps herself awake between the two men sleeping innocently.

*When lord wakes up, he sees son of man
sleeping deeply.
He wakes son of man up.*

Lord You slept profoundly, my friend. I am lord mahasena of kapilavasthu. You will find my mansion on your way. Do not forget to enter its gates. You are invited to dine with me.

The chariot is driven away by seven horses.

SCENE 80

Venue *The mansion of lord mahasena.*

*Son of man and susheela wonder to find the
splendour of the huge mansion.*

Son of man is in rags.

susheela is wearing her only torn dress.

*Men and women go into the mansion wearing
neat and costly dress in a celebration mood.*

*Jinaswathy and Indradatha pass them and
go into the mansion.*

*The beggars and the poor are set apart in a
corner.*

*A guard asks them to stay with the beggars.
They do so.*

The beggars are lead into their dining area.

Son of man and susheela are in tears.

Their hopes disappear.

*Jinaswathy and Indradatha enter the main
hall of reception.*

*They sit in the seats for chief guests.
They see lord walking among the dignitaries.
He is more handsome in his royal costume.
Susheela and son of man also see lord.
They look at their rags.
Lord glances at the area of the beggars.
He identifies two familiar faces among them.
He comes running to his friends in rags and
embraces them.*

Lord Come and dine with me.

Susheela We are in rags. It will be a disgrace for your lordship to dine with us among those neatly dressed persons.

Lord All these dresses are not men. You gave me food when I was hungry. When I was tired, you allowed me to sleep on your lap. You cared me when I was asleep. You showed me pure love. So I shall receive you in the same dress which you laid for me to sit on. You are the chief guests today. Come.

Lord leads them to the seats of the chief guests which are occupied by indradatha and jinaswathy.

Lord Respectable masters. These seats are reserved for our chief guests. Please give them their seats and sit on some other convenient seat.

Indradatha and jinaswathy stand up but find that all seats are occupied by others.

*They wait for their chance in the second row.
The chief guests and lord dine with the dignitaries.*

When the dinner is over, lord declares.

Lord Son of man, my best friend for ever shall manage all my assets in the city of kapilavasthu. This lovable virgin susheela shall be my dearest wife for ever.

The audience receives the declaration with great applaud.

Jinaswathy whispers to indradatha.

Jinaswathy Son of man has disgraced us. He should not be allowed to grow like this.

Indradatha Yes. If we do not do anything, what is the use of our wisdom and experience?

Lord orders to his female attendants.

Lord Dress my wife in the best attire.

They take her into the interior and decorate her with the best clothes and ornaments.

When she comes back to the function, she is the most beautiful woman in the hall.

The marriage ceremony takes place next.

A woman exclaims herself.

Woman This is lord's seventh marriage. All the six of his wives still remain as virgins.

SCENE 81

Venue *The bridal chamber complex of lord.*

A fully decorated susheela waits for her groom in the bridal chamber.

Six virgins conspire to cheat the new bride.

They prepare six other bridal chambers.

They decorate themselves as brides.

They burn the best incense to produce erotic fragrance and arrange sweet fruits for him.

When they meet again, madhuri, the eldest of the virgins speaks.

Madhuri We also had hopeful nights just like the new bride. On the days when we were married to lord, we waited for him until midnight. But he never came. He has not shown any interest in us until this day. He has shown affection towards her. He may go to her chamber this night. He betrayed us. We shall betray him too. One of us will sleep with him tonight. It is our revenge.

The virgins wait for the groom.

Lord does not come as usual.

The six virgins know that lord may not come.

When it is midnight, the virgins feel sleepy.

They feel hopeless one by one.

Madhuri puts out the light and sleeps.

Susheela is looking at the melting candle.

It is becoming shorter and shorter.

She keeps the flame low.

Candles in other chambers go out one by one.

*Susheela sees her candle almost burnt out.
As it glows just before going out, a knock is
heard outside.*

*When she opens the door the candle goes out.
She sees a man outside.*

*She recognizes lord in the morning twilight.
Lord consoles her.*

- Lord** I have gone to the rooms of all virgins along with the early twilight. All were asleep and did not hear my knock. So they remained virgins for ever. You are the only bride who waited for his groom to come. So you shall have the privilege to sleep in my lap for ever. You are my lady.
- Susheela** You know that I love you so much. Still I am confused. Tell me, my beloved lord, why you have declared me as your wife even before asking me or son of man a word.
- Lord** I found him sleeping deeply when I awoke from my nap at your lap.
- Susheela** But I was awake all the time between two men.
- Lord** Both of you are innocent. Your love towards him is precious. I won't let you lose that.
- Susheela** My love shall always follow son of man like turbulent waves flowing towards the firm shores. But you are the true master of my soul mind and flesh.

Lord pats her when she sleeps on his lap.



SCENE 82 Kapilavasthu, AD 19 July 11

Venue A business centre at a state highway.

A eunuch rides a tuskless male elephant through the highways of kapilavasthu.

A street singer sings a story of a prince who left his country to settle a war.

The passers by give the singer the least coins.

Some persons express their appreciation by a look of admiration.

The song goes on as if it has no end.

A man named halapani enters a royal financial enterprise.

Son of man receives him.

Son of man Welcome, halapani. How goes your farming?

Halapani Not much good these days. One sixth of the yield will be charged by you as interest. One sixth is tax. The reapers alone will claim one sixth. Hay is the only profit. The cows get fed by that. Luckily they give plenty of milk.

Son of man Do you need any more loans?

Halapani Sure. I need fifty silvers. I can hand over you ten oxen and two carts as security.

Son of man Keeping cattle and carts means additional expenses. The royal decision is revised and you may keep them yourselves. But your person and all your properties shall remain as the security and we shall recover our dues from you at any time.

Halapani The needy never have the option to define the terms. I consent to your terms.

Son of man Servant, give halapani fifty silvers.

The servant and halapani go into the cash room to complete the formalities.

Some swordsmen enter with ugravratha and santhamurthy, two peasant captives.

Son of man attains the mood of a judge.

But his master is the complainant too.

Son of man Are you betraying lord, ugravratha?

Ugravratha Gods have betrayed us. The cows of the ranchers raided my farm. Whatever left was infected by insects too. I had ploughed other farm lands for my neighbours. They had the same problem and couldn't pay my remuneration.

Son of man And you, santhamurthy?

Santhamurthy I am his neighbour. We have same problems. Have mercy for us this time, master.

Son of man Do you know your dues?

Ugravratha We do. We shall repay all dues the next year.

Son of man I reduce you the interest amount. Ugravratha will get a benefit of five hundred silvers and santhamurthy fifty.

Santhamurthy Let the gods bless you, master.

Son of man But my words are not final. When lord comes, you will get the confirmation. Wait outside until his arrival.

They go out.

A merchant enters.

He takes out gold coins from his pocket.

Merchant These coins were received from a merchant from the far west. I would like to have the exchange of the same in local money.

Son of man examines the coins.

He sees the head of julius caesar on them.

Son of man These gold coins are recent. No exchange value is fixed for them yet. Send them back. Let the caesar have whatever is his and

He gives back the coins and takes out some local coins with lord's head inscribed on it.

Son of man Lord have his. Whatever intelligence I have tells me that the only exchange possible is by weight of pure gold. The purity of gold is unaffected by empires.

*The merchant goes out with his gold coins.
Lord comes in his chariot with seven horses.
Son of man receives him into his chamber.
Lord sits on his seat.
He can see the two peasants talking.*

Santhamurthy Fifty against five hundred! How can I be happy?

Ugravratha You envy!

Son of man comes out to the peasants.

Son of man You may see lord one after another.

*Santhamoorthy enters lord's chamber.
He bows and talks.*

Santhamurthy Son of man says that my dues may be reduced by fifty silvers. Can I have the benefit?

Lord Yes.

Santhamurthy Thank you, lord.

*Santhakarni goes out and ugravratha enters.
Ugravratha prostrates and yells.*

Ugravratha Great lord! You are merciful. You have reduced me by five hundred silver coins!

Lord Yes. I have.

Ugravratha Long live our great lord.

Ugravratha bows and exits.

Son of man An unnatural show of thankfulness!

Lord It is the normal reaction of a man who has received more. The less the benefits, the less is the gratitude.

Lord talks to son of man.

Lord Let me convey you susheela's greetings first.

Son of man I am honoured.

Lord She has unlimited love towards you.

Son of man And I have the same towards you both.

Lord Kapilavasthu is not a place where love flourishes. Everybody with true love is denied its compliment here. They are repaid with heavy hearts and sleepless nights. May I tell you the story of this city?

Son of man I shall hear it with pleasure.

Lord Son of man, you will wonder to know that the city of kapilavasthu was simply a grazing land for the cattle. Men and animals lived in harmony there. Then two blacksmiths came here from the south. They were experts in making ploughshare. Four local carpenters assisted them in making ploughs and yokes. They introduced massive agriculture here. Then kapila the great sage who invented the philosophy of sankhya founded in this land all the necessary requirements of a thinking society. They could develop irrigation schemes and convert the earth into a harvest of gold. The economy grew fast as a result of collective farming. The people evolved a democratic political system. There were many families who engaged one thousand ploughs and two thousand oxen simultaneously. Agriculturists abandoned the killing of cows to get more calves and dung. When their yields steadily increased much greater than their requirements, they exported their products to visalapura and kusumapura. These cities were prominent trade centres. The people of kapilavasthu were then exposed to extravagance and lavish life. Many castles were constructed in the farmlands. People accumulated weapons to use against the rancher societies who raided the farm lands during grassless seasons. Thus the vast village land gradually attained the status of a city and was named after its great philosopher. Wealth brought them extravagance and laziness, power corrupted them and the city began to enter into conflicts with its neighbouring cities. It was at that time the great one took his birth.

As he grew up, he found that the people around him lacked something precious. He thought it was due to illness old age or death. But before his attempts to study them attained any progress, he was sent in exile to protect the interests of some greedy and corrupt leaders of his community. But he contented that he could avert an imminent war. After the great one became enlightened, he came back many times to his land to illuminate his people. They only wanted him as their king. But they would not listen to his words. He went back. During the life time of the enlightened one himself, kapilavasthu began to get destructed and the destruction was complete within the next two centuries. Nobody knows now where the old kapilavasthu is. This city is an entirely new construction. I am trying to build it on a new foundation. But I do not think that I can do it in my entire life time. Even the enlightened one couldn't! See, son of man, the manifestation of the shameless human greed in the street before you.

Ugravratha and his men drag a man through the street.

Lord Guards, bring those men before me.

Guards obey his orders.

Lord Why is this helpless man dragged through the street?

Ugravratha He borrowed fifty silvers from me and didn't repay it.

Labourer Farming is at a loss this year. So the farmers could

not engage as many labourers as they used to. So I did not get much work. My own agricultural venture failed. I became helpless to repay the sum and begged for his mercy. But ugravratha opted to catch me in detention. My wife and children will starve. Have mercy on me.

Lord Do you show mercy, ugravratha? It is true that farming has faced a set back this year.

Ugravratha No mercy! I am not responsible for the set back.

Lord Then you may adjust his dues from your dues to me.

Ugravratha The man is free now. I know that lord is generous.

Lord No! Lord is cruel as well. You shall be paid in your own coin. Guards, arrest this merciless peasant. Attach his holdings towards my dues and distribute them to labourers who are willing to cultivate.

***Guards arrest ugravratha and lead him out.
Lord addresses son of man.***

Lord A person who does not share a benefit with his fellow men is not eligible to enjoy it. The people who have forgotten their neighbours alone are responsible for the fall of kapilavasthu. I am very cruel in dealing with such people. But this may lead a young man like you to draw wrong conclusions. So I shall send you to gunavardhana, the king of the democratic country of visalapura who will train you in the discharge of the execution of royal desires.



SCENE 83 Visalapura, AD 19 August 30

Venue *The royal court of king gunavardhana of the democratic country of visalapura.*

*King gunavardhana sits on the royal throne.
The court is full of dignitaries.
Soldiers are demonstrating fencing.
The demonstration is paused by king.*

King Our soldiers need more practice. During periods of peace, we should practice warfare. During our own life time we should learn how to die.

A guard greets king.

Guard Hail our king. A messenger from lord of kapilavasthu is waiting outside for your audience.

King Let lord's messenger enter.

*Son of man enters the court.
He offers king a formal bow.*

Son of man Lord mahasena of kapilavasthu has sent a gift to your highness. Kindly accept it along with his love.

*The minister receives the gift for king.
King formally touches it as acceptance.*

King How is lord mahasena?

Son of man Fine. Lord has a message for you.

King Recite it.

Son of man Lord mahasena says, "I am sending son of man, an intimate friend of mine to be trained by your highness. He brings this message to your highness in person."

Miniser A very concise message.

King What experience do you have, son of man?

Son of man I am a good gardener.

King You shall supervise all the gardens in my capital city hereafter. You are free to make decisions in your field.

SCENE 84

Venue *A royal garden outside the fortress of the city.*

Son of man rides a horse in the morning from the garden to the fortress.

Outside the fortress he sees two unconscious wounded men.

He dismounts the horse and attends the wounded men.

Son of man mounts the horse, rides to the fortress and addresses the guards.

Son of man Guards, take these wounded men to the royal guest house and give them immediate medical attention.

The guards do as directed.

Son of man enters into the fortress.

He rides on to the royal palace.

He dismounts the horse and meets king.

King receives him.

Son of man Regretful news, your highness. Indradatha, a senior disciple of great master dharmabhadra and jinaswathy, the chief preceptor of the school of mathematics at kusumapura have been attacked outside our fortress and are severely wounded. They have been duly taken care of.

King Let them recover at the earliest. They can help us in the development of our country. I have some plans for them.

SCENE 85

Venue *The royal court of king.*

King is seated on the throne.

The honourable seats next to king are occupied by indradatha and jinaswathy.

Son of man occupies an unimportant seat.

The courtiers silently hear king making a declaration.

King We all know that great master dharmabhadra is the wisest man among the people whom we know. Indradatha is one of his best disciples. Jinaswathy's school is known for its excellence in its variety and in the depth of knowledge of its preceptors. We shall elect our new king soon. I propose indradatha as our next king and jinaswathy as his advisor.

The courtiers accept the proposal with a pleasurable uproar.

Indradatha Though we have political and financial interests in other countries as well, I am inclined to accept the sincere request of your beloved king. Jinaswathy will assist me. So I declare myself as a candidate for the next kingly election of visalapura.

Jinaswathy sees son of man among them.

Jinaswathy Who is that young man sitting there?

King He is my gardener. It is him who has saved your life.

SCENE 86

Venue *The royal court of king.*

King is seated on the throne.

Jinaswathy and a few other dignitaries are present in the court.

A guard enters.

Guard Your highness, a fisherman and a fisherwoman are waiting outside to meet you. They are carrying a huge river fish with them. I have never seen such a huge fish in my life.

Jinaswathy Fishermen need not be allowed to enter the court. We may pay for their fish generously.

Guard They say that it is their day's earnings. They won't sell it. They want to present it as a gift.

King Tell them that I have received the gift. Invite them to the royal feast today. I shall receive them there.

SCENE 87

Venue *The hall for the royal feast.*

The happy king and the dignitaries eat.

Ayushmathy and kaladhara arrive in casual dresses.

King feels displeasure.

He calls a guard to him.

The guard is in full attention.

King Who allowed those country people inside?

Guard These fishermen are your special invitees.

King Is that so? I never break my promise. Fishermen, come near.

Ayushmathy and kaladhara walk steadily to king with their heads held high.

Guard On your knees before our king and hail him.

Ayushmathy His highness is our host. He knows better to greet his guests.

King A woman's utterance first! Fisherman, don't you have something to tell?

Kaladhara Our opinions are always the same.

Indradatha and son of man enter.

King See, my fishermen brethren. You are royal guests today. Can't you come to the feast in better dresses?

Ayushmathy We do not travel with so many dresses.

King Then please go out. The royal guests must have some dignity at least in their dresses.

As ayushmathy goes out indradatha laughs.

Ayushmathy It is no wonder to find such a behaviour if the king is surrounded by evil men like you.

*Indradatha feels insulted.
Kaladhara speaks to son of man.*

Kaladhara Meet us outside the fortress.

*Kaladhara and ayushmathy go out followed
by son of man.*

King Indradatha, do you know them?

Indradatha That fisherwoman was a slave. Three men killed her master and ran away with her. One of the murderers went mad. The other two are this son of man and the fisherman. Son of man followed her now even after seeing your royal wrath against them. Son of man may even revenge you for all the disgrace this woman suffered from your highness. He is very dangerous.

King What shall we do now?

Indradatha Capture the three. Let us put them in the prison.

King Guards, do as instructed by indradatha.

SCENE 88

Venue *The ground between the fortress and the garden.*

Ayushmathy kaladhara and son of man meet.

Son of man Hurry! Indradatha is very powerful here. He may attack us. So let us shelter in the garden house.

They run for their lives.

Son of man's servants rush to protect him.

Son of man Get your swords ready. Close all the gates of the garden. Attack anybody who enters the garden. A messenger shall immediately go to lord of kapilavasthu to inform him that we are in danger.

*Son of man's servants obey his orders and take their positions for the fight to come.
A messenger gallops towards kapilavasthu.
When the royal guards rush to capture the three people, they see that the three are well protected in the garden by their servants.
A guard rushes back to the fortress to inform king and indradatha the latest news.
King and indradatha discuss the matter.
King gives his final orders.*

King No blood shed. Remember that the election is due.

*Indradatha and jinaswathy gallop to the garden house.
Indradatha, jinaswathy and their forces line up outside the garden gate.
Son of man his friends and his men defend them inside at the locked garden gates.
The leaders of both forces see face to face.*

Indradatha Surrender.

Son of man Impossible.

Indradatha If you surrender, your lives will be saved. You shall only be exiled then.

Son of man We are ready to surrender. But before doing that, I must have a private audience with his highness.

Indradatha King won't see your face any more. He has expressed his concern over your presence around the city. He doesn't want to allow his enemies camp in his city to war against him.

SCENE 89

Venue *The ground between the fortress and the garden.*

*King inspects the siege.
Indradatha and jinaswathy accompany him.*

King Our defensive tactics for the last forty days have not been proved successful. I cannot digest that two fishermen and a gardener can challenge the kingdom.

Indradatha Your highness may order for the elimination of your rivals. They must be weak now.

King If we attack them, we must ensure instant victory.

Indradatha The enemies are strong and have connections with our neighbouring countries.

Indradatha and jinaswathy talk in private.

Indradatha If we reveal their identity, king may pardon them. We may perhaps lose our influence too. So let us manipulate his affection towards our great master.

Jinaswathy As you wish.

Indradatha addresses king.

Indradatha Your highness, you know that I am a disciple of great master dharmabhadra. He practices nonviolence. If I have to attack and kill these men after attaining kingship, it may be a disgrace for great master.

King Is a bloody fight necessary, jinaswathy?

Jinaswathy Inevitable, your highness.

King Do as you wish.

Indradatha Soldiers, get ready for a bloody attack. We must capture all those in the garden dead or alive.

They hear galloping sounds and see dust from the far end.

One hundred armed horsemen are galloping towards them.

A chariot with seven horses among them.

The chariot and horsemen stop against the soldiers of visalapura face to face.

Indradatha comes forward to the horsemen.

Indradatha Who has dared to enter the city of visalapura with arms without the permission of his highness?

The chariot moves forward and the horsemen give way to it with reverence.

The beautiful young lady standing up on the chariot is susheela.

Susheela Get lost, idiot! Let king talk to me.

King comes forward.

King I am king gunavardhana of visalapura. What makes you raid my country with armed men?

Susheela I am susheela, lady of kapilavasthu.

King Lord's wife! Warm welcome to you.

Susheela I have come to save son of man. Is he still alive?

King That betrayer is still alive. He is confined in my royal garden and shall be killed today.

Susheela Then you shall not be the king any more.

Indradatha True. His highness will cease to be the king this week and I shall be the next king.

Susheela A dreamer! Go into the castle at once. We are occupying the garden house and the fortress. Lord shall be here soon. If any of your soldiers comes out before lord's arrival, it shall be the commencement of a war between kapilavasthu and visalapura.

King Lord is an honourable person. So I submit to your condition. I remain as the king only for seven days. On the eighth morning, the kingly election of our country takes place in the same venue where we stand. I do not push my country into a war in my last days. Let the new king decide the question of war or peace.

SCENE 90

Venue *The ground between the fortress and the garden.*

The full strength of the horsemen of kapilavasthu and the men of son of man occupy the ground at the garden house.

The soldiers of visalapura are lined up in the ground at the fortress.

There is an open stage between the forces.

Citizens crowd around the stage.

The three friends are in the front row of men. King, indradatha, jinaswathy, lord, susheela and other dignitaries sit on the stage.

King The citizens of visalapura shall elect this day a king to rule them. As the outgoing king, I propose the name of indradatha, a senior disciple of great master dharmabhadra as my successor. I hope that you will elect him unanimously.

Susheela You all know your gardener son of man. He is a gem among all men. This king his proposed successor indradatha and his advisor jinaswathy have conspired against the very life of son of man. Upon our love towards him, I swear that if any of these men gets elected as your king, visalapura must face an imminent war against kapilavasthu. We shall fight until they are put to immediate death.

Jinaswathy Shame on you lady!

Lord Any more abusive words against my lady will claim your life, jinaswathy.

Jinaswathy Pardon me. I only meant that this son of man had defied the king for the sake of a simple fisherman and an unchaste woman. She was a slave. Son of man is an accomplice in the murder of her master. They ran away with her from paithan

Lord Have you called for their explanation?

King It was not necessary.

Lord It is necessary. Let them come forward and speak.

*Ayushmathy comes forward followed by
kaladhara and son of man.
She enters the stage.*

Jinaswathy This is the slave!

Ayushmathy Master jinaswathy, do you know an ascetic named ananthananda?

Jinaswathy I know. He has taught me many things.

Ayushmathy He will be defamed for that. Do you know her daughter ayushmathy?

Jinaswathy I do. She is a very nice girl. She became a nun. She has performed impossible things for the association and for the hermitage complex of her father. I met her five years ago.

Ayushmathy Is she a slave?

Jinaswathy No. She never can be a slave.

Ayushmathy Then I am not a slave either. Can't you identify me?

Jinaswathy Are you the wonderful girl ayushmathy?

Ayushmathy Yes. I am. But you have attempted to kill your own master's daughter.

Jinaswathy I am sorry for that.

King If you are ayushmathy, how did you become a slave?

Ayushmathy As the result of a conspiracy of this evil indradatha with two criminals. He ordered me to go to the monastery at paithan where he got me arrested and sold as a slave. These men saved me. My former master was killed by indradatha's accomplice.

King Let the fisherman talk next.

Ayushmathy He is not a fisherman. He is the famous sculptor kaladhara who carved the foot prints of the enlightened one and designed the rest house for the travelers at the shore of mahanadi.

King I know my mistake now. I only wanted to make a disciple of great master the next king.

Jinaswathy Son of man is the last disciple of great master.

King Then I withdraw the candidature of indradatha. Let son of man be our next king.

Great uproar from the people of visalapura approving son of man's candidature.

Son of man I am an ordinary man. I do not know the art of ruling kingdoms. His highness king gunavardhana is doubtlessly a great king. Let him rule us again.

The king embraces him.

But susheela stands up and declare.

Susheela Even though on misunderstanding, gunavardhana has attempted to kill innocent son of man. I have also declared in public that if any of these three men becomes the king, there shall be a war. I do not want to make my words untrue.

Lord Is there a solution for the dilemma?

Susheela I think there is one. Let son of man be anointed as king and gunavardhana rule as his deputy.

King I am honoured by this suggestion. I accept it. Let son of man be anointed as the king of visalapura.

Son of man is anointed as king.

Gunavardhana swears as his deputy.

Gunavardhana speaks to the public.

King I will act like bharatha who ruled ayodhya as the deputy of rama. As my first order I exile indradatha and jinaswathy from the city of visalapura.

Son of man We are leaving here tomorrow to ayodhya.

King Beware, my highness. The exiled men may revenge you. I shall arrange sufficient men for your protection.



SCENE 91 Ayodhya, AD 19 December 13

Venue A sand bank at the river sarayoo at ayodhya.

Son of man kaladhara ayushmathy and their men sit around a fire in the third quarter of the night.

They are hearing a story told by an aboriginal hunter named ratnakara.

Ratnakara The king was a great warrior. His advisors and ambassadors were sincere and powerful. He himself had performed impossible tasks. He never forgot the welfare of his subjects. The people were happy too. But his personal life proved to be disastrous. A southern king had stolen his wife earlier. Even after

regaining her, he had to abandon his pregnant wife. His brothers were forced to commit unethical deeds. His faithful wife jumped into the abyss of a faulting chasm and killed herself. He saw his brother sinking into the depths of sarayoo. Finally he committed suicide in this river.

Kaladhara sees another fire being burnt a few yards away from them.

Son of man Real tragedy for a man like him.

Ratnakara We do not think so. These personal set backs are inevitable in every life. We worship that king as the most perfect model of a man.

Kaladhara Look at that fire. That may be indradatha. Somebody should go and confirm it.

A young man of their group disappears into the darkness.

Ayushmathy If it is him, shall we fight indradatha?

Son of man Fight is the last resort when compromise is failed.

Kaladhara What are your conditions for the compromise?

Son of man Minimum. I am a king now. I should uphold the dignity of my people. I shall be content with an apology.

***The young man returns with news.
He speaks in a low voice.***

Young man They are indradatha and his armed men.

Kaladhara I shall meet him and know his intention.

***Kaladhara walks to indradatha.
He hears indradatha talking to his men.***

Indradatha If we get hold of him, ensure that he is no more.

Kaladhara Greetings indradatha. What are your men up to?

Indradatha Nothing. Where are your friends?

Kaladhara They are resting in a safe place.

Indradatha They have become my worst enemies. The girl has become intolerable.

Kaladhara Still you talk to me friendly?

Indradatha Because you are a reasonable man.

Kaladhara Then may I try for a compromise between you?

Indradatha Possibly.

Kaladhara A simple apology will be the only condition for the compromise.

Indradatha Agreed.

Kaladhara Shall we go and make the compromise?

Indradatha No. they must come to me and beg my pardon.

Kaladhara For all the evil committed by you?

Indradatha I am more learned and wise.

Kaladhara Fool! You are a born demon ruined by your own pride. Your knowledge is your true enemy. You are similar to the soul that thought it was the universal super being. You will learn only when your source of information is blocked. A compromise with you will be the real disgrace for my friends.

Kaladhara goes back to his camp.

Ayushmathy Did you talk about the compromise?

Kaladhara Compromise? There shall be no compromise. We must leave at once from the proximity of these dirty people. Take my word, friends. If you see him anywhere, keep away from him. Never let yourselves work with him.

Son of man Well. What shall we do now?

Kaladhara There are some holy ascetics on the top of these hills. Let us go there.

As they climb up the hill, kaladhara orders.

Kaladhara Our guards shall ensure that indradatha's men do not pollute the high lands above with their presence. Prevent them if they attempt to do so. When the morning sun rises the guards may start climbing this hill to report before your king.

SCENE 92

Venue *A hut of an ascetic on the top of a hill.*

The sun rises over the hill tops.

A leopard is resting in front of the hut.

The ascetic is performing meditation.

*When the three friends enter the premises,
the leopard goes away.*

Ayushmathy greets the ascetic.

Ayushmathy Our greetings, great soul. Can we enter the hermitage?

Ascetic You are welcome.

They enter the hut.

*The hut is empty except for a holy book and
some vacant pots.*

Ascetic You have not slept all the night. You may rest or sleep here for a while. But there is no eatable available here. I have not had anything for the last three days.

The friends rest in the available space there.

The ascetic continues his meditation.

A young disciple of the ascetic enters the hut.

Ascetic This is my disciple. He stays in another hut at a distance. He comes over here once a week.

*The young disciple prostrates before his
master.*

Disciple Bless me master, and teach me.

Ascetic That may be done later. Have you got any eatable to offer to our hungry guests?

Disciple I have been fasting for the last seven days. I have kept nothing with me.

Ascetic You are a great ascetic.

Disciple You think so because of your own greatness. I am only a worthless disciple.

Ascetic This humility makes you greater. Come; let us go into the forest to collect some fruits.

Son of man stands before them with folded hands.

Son of man Holy men, we have brought some fruits with us. Kindly share them with us and bless us.

Ascetic We are very happy to hear about food. It is the life itself. Let us all bathe before having food.

*They descend the hill to go to the river.
They dip their bodies in the holy river water.
They worship the sun.
They collect some water in lotus leaves.
As they ascend the hill the young guard informs son of man.*

Young man They started early morning towards kurukshethra.

Son of man They are well ahead of us this time.

Young man What shall we do next?

Son of man Follow us to the top of the hill.

The guards follow them.

All of them have their breakfast.

Kaladhara moves to a group of green shrubs.

Kaladhara Look at those shrubs. There is plenty of water stored below that. If you allow me let us dig a well here.

Disciple A well will be a boon for my master.

Ascetic I am old. I won't refuse such a request, but shall be grateful to you instead.

Kaladhara fixes a position for the well.

They all dig the well until water is seen.

The ascetic draws the first pot of drinking water from the well.

Ascetic A service received without payment will not last for long. What can we give them, disciple?

Disciple What is better than a good advice?

Ascetic Then hear me, noble men. When you have to judge other people, see only their merits. When you judge yourselves, see only your demerits. The practice of this principle will bring peace humility and prosperity to all people.



SCENE 93 Kurukshethra, AD 20 March 30

Venue *The farm lands of kurukshethra owned by great master dharmabhadra.*

Intensive agricultural activities take place in the vast farm lands of dharmabhadra. Thousands of ploughs and yokes are used with sufficient animal power. Ayushmathy introduces her friends the history of kurukshethra.

Ayushmathy Kurukshethra is one of the early agricultural lands of the country. Generations of agricultural activity had properly leveled the valley there. Abundant wheat

and paddy were reaped and exported to the capital. Kurukshethra and its farm lands were popular among all the people of the capital. The capital was always under the pressure of warfare of both internal and external origin. The decision makers of the country were city dwellers. They always wanted wars. But when the wars actually occurred, they found them as bitter experiences. But they did not discourage warfare. They decided to change the venue of wars into the leveled farm lands of villages. The tactics of the time was supporting war at leveled grounds. The first village they remembered was that of their food providers. Thus kurukshethra and its fertile lands full of lakes and ponds were permanently selected as the best place for military activities. The warring politicians evolved some rules minimizing the damage that may be caused to the cities and their wealth. It is believed that the best philosophical epitome of all times has been advised here by a charioteer to a great royal warrior. When wars occurred, the farmers lost both their harvest and the labour for the season. As a consolation they were recruited into the infantry of both sides for killing and dying. They received moderate remuneration too. When the wars ceased, the healthy as well as the handicapped farmers would go for cultivation. But they will find the blood of their brothers, torn under dress of their sisters, jackal eaten heads of their neighbours, or the decaying body of an unfortunate royal warrior there. But they had no option but to work to keep them living. War kills both the meek and the great alike. But monuments are only for the great. If a great person gets killed in the fields of kurukshethra, his body gets cleaned by the water from the nearest pond and is duly burnt.

That pond shall be marked as the spot of the courageous death of the martyr. The pond shall be named after the great man and worshiped as a centre of pilgrimage. Kurukshethra is also a tourist centre now with such innumerable pilgrimage water tanks. Great master dharmabhadra established his headquarters at this burial land of warring people as a symbol of peace. He established an agricultural research centre here. See yourselves his agricultural ventures here.

They watch in detail the various agricultural activities there.

SCENE 94

Venue An office complex of dharmabhadra.

Dharmabhadra presides over a meeting of his disciples and friends.

A boy is sitting in his lap.

Indradatha karmadatha ayushmathy son of man jinaswathy sheelabhadra kaladhara and other monks and learned men sit in their appropriate seats.

Dharmabhadra My long journey has resulted in a severe set back in my health. I plan to rest for some months before my pilgrimage to the great himalayas. I would like to delegate some of my responsibilities to you.

Sheelabhadra Great master, we all are your obedient disciples. Your orders will be carried out sincerely.

Dharmabhadra I hope so. Though not present here today, ananthananda shall take care of my ventures in the south. Ayushmathy will help him and succeed him in due course. Karmadatha will take charge of my agricultural research activities in kurukshethra. Jinaswathy will shoulder all responsibilities in the development of my educational activities. He will also attempt to establish a universal centre of knowledge at kusumapura. Indradatha must take charge of all political activities including our relationship with kingdoms and their political leaders. The other duties and responsibilities may be delegated to eligible monks by a committee consisting of sheelabhadra indradatha and karmadatha in a majority basis. Any questions?

Nobody has any questions.

A silence.

Son of man stands up.

Son of man What shall I do father?

Dharmabhadra You may assist indradatha in his duties.

Kaladhara Impossible. Son of man can never work under indradatha.

Indradatha You are an outsider. You have no right to express your opinion here.

Son of man Truth has its right to be expressed anywhere. I won't stay here with indradatha. Father, you call me your son and your disciple. But you do not give me

whatever I am entitled to. I need my inheritance. I shall go elsewhere.

Sheelabhadra Inheritance is a new word in the history of this monastery.

Dharmabhadra Son, your time has not come yet. You will learn your duties when the time is ripe.

Son of man Even a squirrel can do something. I insist on my inheritance.

Dharmabhadra Then you shall be the head of the monastery at vinashtapura on the bank of river sindhu hereafter. It is not long away from the harbour city of varunatheertha. I empower you to travel among the people to inspire them and to provide them with new hopes and aspirations by doing wonders and to teach them about deliverance from slavery and inequality. I share my spiritual power out with you and wear you my signet ring.

Son of man kneels before dharmabhadra.

Dharmabhadra Whatever you do there, do it for me. Whatever wealth you acquire there is mine and whatever liabilities you create there is mine. Whatever you teach them, teach it for me.

Dharmabhadra blesses son of man and wears him his signet ring.

Son of man stands up.

His friends around him.

*When son of man goes out kaladhara and
ayushmathy follow him.*

But dharmabhadra does not allow that.

Dharmabhadra Only the destined people can reach vinashtapura. If you follow him, he won't reach there. It is a cursed land.

Indradatha laughs

Indradatha The prodigal son should be kept outside the gate.

Dharmabhadra stops him.

Dharmabhadra It is not a time to be happy. The worthy son of man is attempting to lose his soul. If he loses it, both the earth and the heaven shall feel it as well. I wish deeply if he were back at home.

*The boy feels embarrassed and stands close
to dharmabhadra.*

Boy When I grow up, I shall settle all these quarrels.

Dharmabhadra You should do that nagarjuna. But these monks easily get irrational. Before settling the quarrels, I hope you can teach them rational thinking.

Boy I will do that.

*Dharmabhadra pats on the back of the boy.
Nagarjuna is happy.*



SCENE 95 Maru, AD 20
The full moon day of the enlightened one

Venue A desert in maru.

Son of man sits lonely in the desert at an elevated place.

He can see the vast desert in detail.

The desert is unusually active this day.

An aboriginal hunter passes before him.

An ascetic follows him at a distance.

Son of man sits in the lotus posture with his eyes closed.

A king crosses the desert with his men.

Full moon shines over the head of son of man.

*A naked monk travels in the night.
He sees the man in lotus posture.
The naked monk approaches son of man and
sits in the same posture against him.
A naked man against a man clad in full dress.
A king against an ascetic.
Son of man opens his eyes.
He sees eternal flame of soul before him.*

Son of man Dear friend flame of soul, I am in awe to find you in this midnight in this desert land of maru.

Flame of soul Your presence here on this full moon day of the enlightened one is a wonderful experience for me. You have only one year more to perform your mission here. But beware. This peaceful night shall be disturbed soon by the clamour of ideas and swords. Our souls shall be tempted and tested vigorously.

Son of man I know that your words are always true. You should not leave me alone in this night.

Flame of soul Everybody is alone when taking final resolution. My presence here may lead you into biased decisions. The book of bhadrabahu teaches me to lose. Our friendship shall be the last thing I will lose in my life. I bid you fare well.

Son of man Do not go away before I embrace you.

*Son of man embraces flame of soul.
He weeps bitterly.
Tears wet the earth.*

Son of man When you depart me, I feel as if a soul to soul relation is lost and my heart breaks.

Flame of soul You cry when you think that I depart you. But you will smile at the time of my real departure.

*The moon follows the naked man as he walks.
Son of man looks at him until he crosses the horizon.*

Then he lies down on a sand bed.

He looks at the stars above.

An echo of a loud voice is heard in the desert.

Indradatha Son of man, son of man, where are you?

*Son of man keeps looking at the blissful stars.
Indradatha shouts the name of son of man.
Finally he finds son of man lying on the sand bed and looking at the full moon.*

Indradatha You are as cool as the night in this desert.

Son of man Welcome, indradatha.

Indradatha Do you feel wonder?

Son of man I knew that you would come to me some day.

Indradatha But not on today, I dare say. Do not misunderstand.
My arrival is not under orders of great master.

Son of man Did you tell him your plan?

Indradatha No. But he can foresee. Your action has worried him desperately. He thinks that you have taken the wrong path.

Indradatha shivers.

Son of man Do you feel very cold?

Indradatha Yes.

Son of man prepares a fire from the ember of a near by went out fire.

Indradatha You are a strong and intelligent person. You learn things fast. I have come to bring you back home.

Son of man What for?

Indradatha Great master is very old. He will die soon.

Son of man Do not utter inauspicious words.

Indradatha Still it is true. I am his most powerful disciple. But everybody may not approve of my supremacy. If you support me, I can control the entire association. I shall give you whatever you ask for. I can make any of your dreams come true if you utter a single word expressing your inner desire; power, duty, wealth, woman or anything else. I have only one condition.

Son of man And what is that?

Indradatha The final control of the association shall vest on me.

But you are free to require anything.

Son of man My only requirement is the welfare of the people.

Indradatha I know. I know. You are an expert in agriculture cattle breeding and handicrafts. You can make the entire country prosperous, if you take the charge of all the agricultural activities of the association. You are able to convert even the stones into bread.

Son of man I am not content with prosperity alone.

Indradatha Well! I know that you have an affinity towards wonders. You want to preach and show the people great wonders that may change their lives. Everybody wants to. I shall make you the head of all of our propaganda activities. Whatever you teach can be taught as the words of the enlightened one. You will ascend to top popularity and if you fall the entire association and its followers shall support and protect you from any possible damage.

Son of man The words of the enlightened one are not for experimentation.

Indradatha Indeed! You may not do that. You have traveled from musiris to maru. The association has its influence in all the places you traveled. It extends its influence to gandhara, madraka, purushapura and other numerous cities which you have never seen or heard of. You are the king of visalapura. I can support you to make an empire. You can make your subjects happier and more peaceful than anybody else. I shall make you

the most powerful of all rulers in the world. Can you follow me? I only need the unchallenged control over the association. I need nothing more. I do not need power; but only some respect from great persons like you. You simply have to bow before me when we meet in public. Then I shall bring you all the power prosperity and popularity of the entire world.

Son of man I have learnt now that my worst known enemy is my best promoter. Indradatha, I shall worship only the blessed one and serve only his purpose as far as the association is concerned. So get away from here and leave me alone.

Indradatha laughs.

His face expresses contempt and cruelty.

Indradatha My hold in the association is so strong that you will have to depend on me one day. You are all alone and will be helpless as a worm. I can kill you now. But I want to show you how humble you really are. When we meet again, you shall be incomparably low.

Indradatha goes away.

Son of man still looks at his stars.

The moon has gone half towards west.

A group of armed men headed by a man manu with a tuft of hair on top of his head enters and approaches son of man.

Manu Traveler, who left here cursing you?

Son of man It was indradatha, a chief disciple of dharmabhadra.

Manu So you are not in good terms with the association.
That is good.

Son of man Who are you?

Manu A brahmana named manu. Brahmana is an ancient name given to lunatic preceptors. One of our ancestor preceptors was mad at philosophy. He wouldn't kill animals or drink soma. He invented a new hypothesis brahma. It possessed him so much that he had the hallucination that everything was this brahma. Whenever people saw him, they mocked at him saying, "There goes the man in the path of brahma." Brahmana is the sanskrit word they used to abuse him and his followers. But instead of getting insulted they took it as a compliment. Time proved that the brahma philosophy had been much better than many others. Then the old abusive name brahmana attained the greatest respect in the country. They have powers and privileges. Even kings fear them. By the way, where are you going?

Son of man To the harbour city of kushasthala.

Manu Then we shall give you company. Soldiers, honour him as a holy man among us.

When leader and the group move towards south, son of man follows.

He is followed by the animals to carry goods and finally by numerous unfortunate slaves with heavy loads.

Soldiers control them.



SCENE 96 Kushasthala, AD 20 June 02

Venue A leveled ground near the harbour.

On one side of the ground there is a liquor shop run by shaundika.

A fire is burning in a sacrificial pit decorated by baked bricks on the other side.

Priests chant hymns, offer incense and ghee to the sacrificial pit and do other rituals.

Some of the guards cross the ground and go to the liquor shop.

They order drinks.

Manu and son of man sit at a table.

The servants of the shop bring them liquor.

Manu No. I don't drink.

Son of man Me too. I have a vow not to drink.

Manu The times of vows penance and austerity have gone for ever. The modern times are of crime and punishment. The ancient sacrificial rituals are coming back once again in a less brutal manner. We have had more than enough sages and hymns. We cannot afford any more of them. The hymns have been duly classified too. Sufficient supplemental explanatory and philosophical texts have also been constructed for supporting our rite. But some of our philosophical treatises uphold absolute freedom and equality. They are uncontrollably popular too. Any more intellectual works on the subject may upset the very existence of our political system. So no addition or deletion can be allowed in the approved standard texts. We have edited and commented on eleven philosophical texts of this nature to befit our requirement. The other works will die with the time. We have plans to train our preceptors in the delta of the dying saraswathy. A dying river is a perpetual source of energy for a developing religion. She can be worshipped as a goddess as well. We uphold the superiority of the preceptor class. They alone are eligible for access to all powers. Power of the religion and power of the state should go hand in hand. The power of the knowledge should be controlled by the other two powers. Powerless knowledge is helpless. But if we want to opt only one from the three powers, we won't forsake knowledge. It is our last resort. Custom and culture will last for centuries. So we must control them according to our needs. The popular atheistic

religions shall cease to exist because everybody has access to its leadership. Power corrupts. When an unworthy person attains power, the entire establishment decays and finally collapses. We accept even the foreigners into the preceptor class now. It is not a policy for ever. The political instability of this frontier area compels us to do so. I know that you are a foreigner. But you are more eligible than many of our preceptors. May I initiate you into the preceptor class?

Manu laughs.

Manu But they have various temples established in almost all countries. As long as they have such symbols of righteous living, their religions may survive. So we must destroy the idols in their temples and substitute them with our deities.

A guard comes to them.

Guard An ideal place for the erection of saraswathy's idol is identified. But there are some other statues.

Manu Destroy them. No. I am coming too. Son of man, let us see after the rituals are completed.

*The guard leads manu to the place.
There is a statue of a naked jina there.*

Manu Did you dig the big pit?

Guard Yes.

Manu His symbols of refuge and celibacy must be cut first and thrown into the pit. Then dislocate the entire construction and bury it.

The guards do so.

Manu Let the idol of the goddess be brought here for erection.

A crowd in full mood of celebration brings the idol of the goddess.

Manu completes the rituals and installs the idol where the naked idol has stood earlier. People make a great uproar in ecstasy as they dance and chant hymns.

Son of man hears this uproar and asks a sailor sitting at a nearby table.

Son of man What is that sound?

Sailor This is the uproar of the celebration on the conquest over the celibacy of the one who conquered the world by the daughter of the creator.

Son of man What do you mean?

Sailor Disaster. There shall be a riot soon. It is no longer safe here. Before the bloodshed starts, let us get away from here.

*They go out and hurry towards the harbour.
They reach at a ship.
They hear the sounds of a riot.*

Sailor This is our fishing ship. We are on our way to varunatheerttha at the river mouth of sindhu.

Son of man Can I accompany you there? I have some experience in fishing too. I wish to go away from this mad land as far as possible. I shall join you now itself.

Sailor You are most welcome.

SCENE 97

Venue *A fishing ship in the arabian sea.*

*The sailors catch fish with nets and hooks.
The monsoon rain water flows out from the
deck through a wooden pipe.
Son of man throws a net and catches fish.*

Sailor You always get bigger fishes. Who taught you fishing?

Son of man A scholar named ayushmathy who always caught the greatest fishes from the depths of the river mahanadi.

Sailor Sea is not a huge river. This is the season of plenty. Prepare your nose to smell the mud. You will get a great catch from there.

*Sailor throws his nets where his nose says
and gets plenty.
The wind blows strongly.
Son of man adjusts the ship masts accordingly.*

Sailor You are a good sailor too.

Captain The waves are becoming stronger. The shore is near.
Get the anchors ready.

They get ready for landing at the harbour.

Captain We have reached varunatheerttha, the port city named after the god of sea and virtue. This pilgrimage spot is a place of tourist attraction also.

The masts are tied and the ship is anchored.

Captain Son of man, do you join us? You will be paid well.

Son of man My father has sent me for a job with better remuneration. As soon as we reach the city, I shall start my journey to vinashtapura.

Captain You may hire a small boat. It is not costly.

Son of man I don't have any wealth except the strength of my soul.

Captain We will give you sufficient money.

The ship and the shore are separated by a surface of water with strong waves.

Sailors get down and walk over to the shore.

Son of man sees sailors walking over the sea.

He hesitates to follow them.

Captain Have faith on you, son of man. It is high tide now. There is a stable bridge beneath the waves. We are walking over the bridge.

Son of man walks over the bridge.



SCENE 98 Vinashtapura, AD 20 June 20

Venue The river sindhu at vinashtapura.

*Some pilgrims travel in small boats for an
enjoyment trip at vinashtapura.*

Son of man travels in the boat of a fisherman.

Fisherman Vinashtapura is a land of pigs and prostitutes. I am sure that you are not after pigs. Do you want to enjoy?

Son of man No.

Fisherman No lies. The only men at vinashtapura are the handicapped greek dimitri and his few servants. Tourists and criminals visit the place at random. The

rest of the land is occupied by women. The wonder is that I have never seen a child with these women. Most of them are beautiful and know how to make men happy.

They land where dimitri runs his shop.

Dimitri receives them.

The shop is partitioned into a pigsty and a grocery cum restaurant.

Fisherman Do you have some food?

Son of man No. It is dirty here.

Fisherman Then you will starve. This is the only shop here.

Son of man I should reach the monastery. Where is it?

Fisherman The monastery? All these people following us are going to the monastery. Do you want to be an early bird there? Though the earlier are happier, it is more costly too. Anyway let us go there. Dimitri, bind two pigs for me. I shall be back within half an hour.

Fisherman takes son of man in the boat to the monastery at a distance on the opposite bank and goes back with a smiling remark.

Fisherman Have a good time, son of man.

Son of man enters the monastery.

It is an old decayed building.

There is a crowd of women waiting for their customers there.

Some women go with some pilgrims to the nearest temple of the dancing goddess.

A middle aged woman exclaims when son of man approaches.

Woman A very young man!

Son of man Can I meet antharyamy?

Woman Chief monk won't come out now.

Son of man It is urgent.

He does not meet our customers personally. The chief monk is having a discussion with kuttini.

SCENE 99

Venue *An inner chamber in the monastery.*

Blind antharyami and old kuttini have a discussion.

Antharyami A messenger from the north east of sindhu met me yesterday with a message from great master. A new head is appointed to rule this monastery of vinashtapura.

Kuttini Who will dare to come willingly to this lost hand? He must be either exiled or punished for some crime.

Master antharyami, I hate to see a cruel criminal appointed as your substitute. Another misfortune shall infect our womenfolk then.

Antharyami Impossible! The messenger told me that the new head of monastery is a great king named son of man. His arrival is not predicted. He might have arrived already or he may land months later, perhaps he will never come at all. Great master has insisted that the new head must take change only after meeting kuanyin and receiving a gift from her. The messenger has handed over the precious gift to me to hand it over to kuanyin.

Kuttini Show me the gift.

Antharyami Nobody should see that. I myself am blind too. Ask sivamangala to come over here to receive the gift on behalf of kuanyin.

Kuttini Your orders shall be executed

Antharyami Let this old man rest for a while. Fare you well for the day.

Kuttini leaves antharyami alone in the chamber.

She walks through the corridor.

Kittini murmurs.

Kuttini Will the new chief be a merciless scoundrel?

Kuttini reaches the front yard.

*She addresses the talkative women there.
Son of man is a spectator.*

Kuttini No more chattering. A scoundrel named son of man is appointed as the new head of the monastery replacing master antharyami. He is a king and is merciless. You are having another hard time.

Kuttini sees son of man.

Kuttini Who are you? What do you want?

Son of man A man in need of a shelter. Can I meet master antharyami?

Kuttini He is asleep. You can meet him tomorrow morning.

Son of man Where can I spend the night?

Kuttini If you have money, you may hire one of these girls and sleep with her at the temple of the dancing goddess. She will keep your body hot.

Son of man Though I am wealthy, I have no money now.

Kuttini If you do not like the smell of the pigsty of dimitri, you may spend the night then in one of the caves at the rock formation on the other bank of the river. The river is shallow there.

*As son of man walks towards the caves he
hears kuttini talking.*

Kuttini Vasanthasena, tell sivamangala that the master has asked for her audience in the morning.

*Son of man crosses the river.
He selects a cave in the rock formation as
his home.*

SCENE 100

Venue *Landing place for the boats*

*Sivamangala and vasanthasena are waiting
for the boat to come.*

The morning sun is reflected in the river.

*Rahula, a ten year old boy rows the boat
towards them from the other side of the river.*

Vasanthasena I have never seen the punctual sivamangala hurrying for anything from this ferry.

Sivamangala I have been destined to wait at the crystal sand bank of this river for ever.

Vasanthasena This is not the first time you are telling this.

Sivamangala What else story have I got to tell in my entire life?

Vasanthasena War broke out on the very night in which pushyamitra asked you to wait for him at this sand bank. He was either killed or was forced to flee for ever. Have you got any more stories?

Sivamangala Tale tellers can't tell otherwise. I was romantic when that night came and thought that it was the most beautiful night I had ever seen. My realities and dreams were the same until then. I deeply loved this land, river, roads, sky, farms and even these sand grains. I was angry with pushyamitra when he didn't come even after midnight. I felt my heart uneasy when I thought that I might be forsaken. My love born hatred prompted me to throw some handful of sand into the clear cool water of the flowing river. I had imagined that the sound which the sand made in the water would calm down my immense lust. But when I heard unfamiliar voices, and saw the soldiers from the northwest attacking and burning our huts, I lost all my emotions and thoughts. I did not even feel fear. I still remember the screaming men dying in spears and swords, women running and hiding for saving their lives and children being kicked and stamped by soldiers. I saw some of my friends rolling all naked on the muddy sward at the bank on the other side of the river with uncontrollable grief after being subjected to cruel massive rape. All the days followed by that nightmare offered me sleepless nights fighting for my life and honor until kuanyin united us all. Then we started our defensive rebellion applying poison paste on our nipples, sharpening our nails into claws with medications and by hiding sharp knives under our garments. When the war was won by us, we had to sell voluntarily our own flesh for existence. Vinashtapura has changed into a manless immoral land of prostitutes.

Sivamangala cries.

Vasanthasena Control yourself. Look, rahula has arrived.

*Rahula has landed the boat at the shore.
He greets them.*

Rahula Welcome, mothers.

Sivamangala Let me kiss you, rahula.

*Sivamangala kisses rahula on his forehead
and pats smoothly over his head.*

They enter the boat.

Vasanthasena rows the boat.

*The boat cuts the waves and moves steadily
across the river.*

*Sivamangala puts her both hands in the
water to hear the musical sound of the river.*

*Rahula is sitting on the lap of the rowing
vasanthasena.*

He smiles at sivamangala.

Sivamangala What did you have for the breakfast?

Rahula As usual.

Sivamangala Only air and water?

Rahula smiles at them.

Vasanthasena Some of your mothers must have got some good rewards yesternight. They may visit you with gifts this noon.

Sivamangala Do not tempt him.

*The boat lands on the shore.
As the two women walk towards the
monastery rahula waves his hands.*

SCENE 101

Venue *Rock formation*

*Son of man wakes up in a cave in the
morning.*

A tiny fire still burns beside him.

He brushes his teeth with leaves.

He washes his hands and mouth in the river.

*He pisses at the bushes and finally dives in
to the river.*

He rises up towards the sun.

*His long hair and beard flow in the flowing
river water.*

*He swims like a fish in the river and drives
again to catch a fish which he cooks in the fire.*

It is his breakfast.

*Son of man walks towards the monastery with
his wet dresses dried by squeezing.*

*A tourist from varunatheerttha comes out
from the temple of the dancing goddess and
walks towards his boat to go back to his
destination.*

*Son of man walks towards the temple from
where the tourist has come from.*

*A woman hurries away from him.
The ancient temple of the dancing goddess.
A beautiful dancing girl is the idol.
One of its hands is broken.
The temple is built of burnt bricks.
The columns of the construction are lavishly
carved with images of rhinoceroses, great
bulls, triple edge spears and mystical seal
impressions.
Son of man sits near a column and looks at
the distant river.
He hears the sound of a man charuvela
speaking to a woman padmini on the rear
side of the temple.
Charuvela is looking at the sky with his head
resting on the breast of the girl.
She keeps his head in her both hands.
Her hands quench the shivering in his sad
voice.*

Charuvela It is the fourth time I am coming for your company. I am only a blacksmith. I can make sickles and plough shares. If there had been agriculture in this land, I would have stayed here forever. But I see nobody here except pigs and my beloved beauty.

Padmini You may come again at any time. I will receive you.

Charuvela I am not sure. Unrest is brewing at aryavartha. A war may break out at any time. Let me pray you on my love towards you to accompany me abandoning this lost land of prostitutes.

Padmini allows him to lie in her lap.

Padmini I have spent all my twenty five years here. I have seen you only four nights but I must confess that you are the most loving one among all the men who have slept with me. So I have no hesitation to tell you the truth. All lives of vinashtapura are living in the past. Our best expectation is a recapturing of our ancient life.

Son of man listens the conversation sitting at the other side of the temple.

Padmini separates herself from charuvela.

Padmini I do not know whether you can imagine that there has been a great civilization surrounding the great river meandering round the monastery. There was a great city built in burned bricks around here. Numerous groups of ranchers came on horses from the northwest and attacked us with fire arrows for centuries. An agricultural society cannot survive wars extending for centuries. Our vast agricultural lands were first conquered to make them the grazing lands for their cattle. Once the farm lands had been lost, the cities were also forced to surrender. Thus our great peaceful civilization collapsed before the merciless assaulters. Finally we attempted for some pacts and regained some of our cultivating lands which enabled us at least to survive for some centuries. We were kept away from accumulating wealth and the magic of power. We were degraded as the third rate cultivators destined to feed all the people. But we preserved the remnants of our ancient civilization. No generation of our ancestors did not know the

bitter experience of war. We also are the victims of war. Even though only women have survived now in the land, none of us shall depart our beloved legacy.

Charuvela faces padmini.

Charuvela I love you more. I should not lose you. Will I get a living here?

Padmini There are four groups of people living here. Some grown up men live with dimitri. They have no women with them. They fear us. They won't trouble us and even help us by supplying goods for our domestic needs. The second group is comprised of women like me who live by prostitution. We and the blind head of monastery live in this island within the meandering river. The third group is the old wounded deserted and forceless women of our folk who reside at our old village. The group of nuns lives on the other side of the river under the leadership of kuanjin. The only masculine offspring among us is rahula who thinks that all the women of this land are his mothers. Can you find a work in any of these groups?

Charuvela There is no space for a blacksmith where there is no agriculture, handicraft or industry.

He embraces padmini again.

Charuvela My love has become a failure. I am leaving both this land and your love.

Padmini wipes off his tears.

Padmini I shall remember you for ever.

Charuvela No more meaningless words, please. Why should you break my heart again?

*Charuvela walks away followed by padmini.
They are walking towards the river.
Son of man addresses charuvela from
behind.*

Son of man Brother,

They turn back and see him.

Charuvela Who are you?

Son of man I am the one who dares to do what you have feared to do.

Charuvela Speak simple words.

Son of man I have decided to stay here.

Charuvela Impossible!

Son of man I have my own ways.

Charuvela Where will you stay?

Son of man In the caves.

Charuvela What will you do?

On the other river bank pigs play in dirt.

Son of man I shall look after those pigs.

Charuvela A very good job indeed!

Son of man Can you assist?

Charuvela What can I earn in return?

Son of man You will get my sister as your wife.

Padmini Where is your sister?

Son of man You are my sister.

Padmini A sister and a wife! Will the women of vinasthapura regain such a past?

Son of man I am telling you the truth. You shall be the wife of this man here after.

Son of man joins the hands of charuvela and padmini.

They bow before him.

Son of man blesses them.

Son of man God has united you. So let yourselves never depart. You have hereby consented to create a new world. Come. The caves at those rocks shall be your home. You are forming a fifth group at vinashtapura, the group of the true heirs of the land who have reclaimed their past.

SCENE 102

Venue *The monastery.*

Antharyami speaks with vasanthasena and sivamangala.

Antharyami Daughter sivamangala, miss no word of mine. Had he arrived, I would have left here. This is the gift for Son of man. Keep this as a secret.

Antharyami hands over a packet to sivamangala.

Sivamangala Kuanyin informs you to keep a close look at all your visitors from distant lands because our women shall be tempted severely. Your words must be ideal.

Antharyami We shall take care.

Sivamangala Let me leave now.

Sivamangala goes.

When vasanthasena follows her antharyami speaks.

Antharyami How is Vilasavathy?

Vasanthasena Her health is worsening day by day.

Antharyami Padmini hasn't returned yet. Will you find her for me?

Vasanthasena Of course.

*When vasanthasena turns towards the temple,
she comes face to face with son of man.
They look deep into each others eyes.
A few silent moments pass.*

Son of man Is master anthrayami present?

Vasanthasena There he stands.

*Vasanthasena goes in search of padmini.
Antharyami's eyes are filled with tears.*

Antharyami Dear vilasavathi, what have you done to face such sufferings?

*Son of man looks at the woman until she turns
towards the temple.
Son of Man then approaches antharyami.
He finds him in tears.*

Son of man I greet you master antharyami.

Antharyami wipes off his tears.

Son of man Master, why are you in tears?

Antharyami I cry because I am blind. I shall never see the great soul who will succeed me as the head of our monastery.

Son of man No. your tears make you a sinner.

Antharyami It is a boon to see a great soul. I see no fault in weeping for him, especially in the case of son of man who is a spiritual leader and a reformist as well as a king.

Son of man You are not telling the truth. Son of man is an ordinary man like you.

Antharyami You might have been blamed by son of man on account of some sins committed by you. I know no other reason why you should hate son of man otherwise.

Son of man I love you as much as I hate son of man. If I love son of man, you will hate me.

Antharyami Is it possible for a man to love me when he hates a great soul? You are not just. So get away from me so that I shall never hear you voice.

Antharyami presses both his ears with his hands.

A silence.

Son of man tells calmly when antharyami frees his hands.

Son of man You wish to see son of man and hate to hear my voice!

Antharyami You are evil. Get out of here.

Son of man You have showed me the truth that how hateful son of man is. I wish if you would have seen me.

Antharyami If I had eyes to see you, I would have shut them for ever never to see you.

Son of man Master antharyami, you are worried. You had loved a lady with lust. Her memory has made you sad. There shall come a day when you feel the presence of son of man through your soul.

*Antharyami can't help weeping.
Son of man turns to go when he sees
vasanthasena coming back towards them.
She looks deeply at him.
Son of man moves away from her.*

Vasanthasena Is my master crying!

Antharyami Daughter, I feel as if I should meet vilasavathy at once. Could you show this blind man the way to her?

Vasanthasena leads him to the destination.

SCENE 103

Venue *The village.*

*Desperate human beings live in the ruined
huts of vinashtapura.
Handicapped, sick and the feeble live there.
What is seen is poverty and hardship.
A lean middle aged woman with sheer skin
and skeleton lying sick in a cow dung
besmeared hut is vilasavathy.*

Vilasavathy Rudrani, rudrani. Where have you gone girl?

Rudrani, a handicapped woman enters the room with much difficulty.

Rudrani Greetings, vilasavathy. Do not shout when you are sick.

What else can I do? Master antharyami has given word that he plans to visit me today. Vasanthasena has hurried away to somewhere. How can he be received with dignity when I am sick? Where is Aksa?

Rudrani She went out to collect some medicinal shrubs for you.

Vilasavathy Where shall I seat him? What shall I give him to eat and drink?

Rudrani Nothing. If you offer him our hospitality, he will surely know our deficiency. Whatever we give shall ultimately give him sorrow. So let us offer him whatever we have plentiful.

Vilasavathy What is that?

Love, affection, care and respect.

Vilasavathy Well, if you stay with me.

Rudrani I am with you.

Vasanthasena and antharyami enter the hut.

Rudrani Master has arrived.

Vilasavathy If I could move a bit from this posture!

Rudrani Welcome master, welcome vasanthasena.

Antharyami I can recognize the sound. Rudrani, show me vilasavathy at once.

Rudrani She is expecting you.

Antharyami Seat me beside her.

*Vasanthasena obeys the order.
Antharyami takes vilasavathy's hands in his
both hands.*

Antharyami Vilasavathy, are you well?

Tears flow from her both eyes.

Vilasavathy I am fine. Are you, my master?

Antharyami The time for suffering the remuneration for my sins has come. I had an illusion that I had experienced the fruits of my actions when I had blinded myself. But I know now, vilasavathy, that the process is yet to begin.

Vilasavathy Let the master be given some privacy.

Vasanthasena and rudrani go out.

Vilasavathy What is there new to worry about?

- Antharyami** An outsider has inquired about our past.
- Vilasavathy** We have done nothing wrong. We have loved each other. We had consoled each other. Naturally a child was born to us. I would have grown her up. The time was against us. It was her fate to get killed.
- Antharyami** But how, my dear? She was refused the milk, warmth, and kisses of her mother, and was put to death the third day of her birth along with two other babies. Three innocent infants, stiff after three days' continues crying upset the mental balance of the kind head of the monastery who blinded his both eyes being unable to see the horrible sight. It was the popular version. But only we know, my spouse, that I had done so only for the sake of our own only daughter.
- Vilasavathy** I have lost the memories of those days of war. I see now only unhealth and death.
- Antharyami** War had ceased on those days. The only cause was the vengeance of kuanyin. Nobody thought that anybody else other than cruelly raped women would have conceived those days. You could not tell the truth for my sake. Until great master dharmabhadra came, around fifty infants were brutally killed under the leadership of kuanyin. Then pregnancy among our women became rare. The only remaining offspring of vinashtapura is rahula who wonderfully could survive a few more days of starvation.
- Vilasavathy** He has sucked my milk. Let all truths return to the dust with us like our daughter. Before you loved me,

you had the ambition to become a preceptor at takshasila. If you again get such a chance, never refuse it. I would not live much. Do not worry about me.

Antharyami I do not know whether we shall meet again. Let me give you my last kiss.

Vilasavathy There is no more fire in my lips as in my youthful days. I am ugly now and my flesh will get rotten in some unknown grave soon. So leave me and keep your sweet memories alive.

Antharyami You are not only flesh to me. You are my soul itself. I know the meaning of love only through you. Do not forbid me.

Antharyami kisses vilasavathy.

Antharyami Your lips have the taste of death.

Vilasavathy Then let me die peacefully.

Vilasavathy calmly closes her eyes.

SCENE 104

Venue *The cave.*

Charuvela, padmini and son of man sit at a fire.

Padmini We think that we are the predecessors of the people to emerge from vinashtapura. But we do not know anything about our successors.

Charuvela No people have ever known their successors. We have our own problems of existence. First of all we have to keep the fire without getting extinguished.

Padmini We keep fire in lamps with cotton wool soaked in processed pig fat.

Charuvela Pig fat?

Padmini We can buy pigs from dimitri.

Charuvela What is the source of the money? If I get a bull skin I can make leather for designing a forge.

Padmini You can find many wild bulls in the hilly forests beyond the old farm lands there.

Charuvela We can't kill bulls with wooden sticks. Where shall we get some iron or copper?

Padmini We can get plenty of them around the old camp of the soldiers where the young women reside now. Let us pick them up in the night.

Charuvela We want some wood to use as charcoal and as handle.

Padmini There are bamboo groves near the house of kuanyin. If we cross the river there you can find a forest beyond the old physician's residence.

Charuvela As long as you are here to advice us, we shall never face the scarcity of a commodity.

Padmini Well. What else do we need?

Charuvela We want agriculturists.

Padmini Easy! Persuade some agriculturists who come over here to marry some of my friends.

Charuvela Splendid! We need seeds too.

Padmini Seeds! What are they?

Charuvela Seeds give birth to plants.

Padmini I haven't seen any of them recently. But I have seen a wonderful thing at the bamboo groves of kuanyin. I have seen baby plants shooting out from the waste grains of wheat which she uses to feed doves.

Son of man I wish to visit that place.

Padmini Time is precious. We may visit there at once using rahula's boat.

She extinguishes the fire.

SCENE 105

Venue *The river.*

The three persons travel in rahula's boat through the river in the night.

As the men row padmini shows them the monastery, the diversion of the river from

where the old camp of the soldiers can be seen, the ruined old village, the remnants of the old civilization, the manless physician's home beyond which there is a tiny forest and a rill which joins with the river at a distance. They land and pull the boat into the shore. They walk upstream the rill until they reach the bamboo groves.

The pathway towards the right leads to the residence of kuanyin.

As they walk a folk of doves chatter and fly. Padmini shows son of man the newly shot out wheat plants.

Light and sound are seen at kuanyin's house.

Padmini Hurry up. They have been awakened.

As the three turn to go Charuvela sees something.

Charuvela Stop. Do you see there two men?

As son of man moves towards them the other two hurries away.

As the thieves viroopaksha and gavaaksha walk towards the west they talk.

Viroopaksha Moonlight will go out this quarter itself. Darkness will surround the pigs then. A single strike must kill one of them. Even a growl will invite unwanted attention. We will tie it with the plant rope and carry them in the wooden stick with you.

Gavaksha The old servants of dimitri are guarding the pigsty.
Sleepless lot!

Viroopaksha I can keep them away, with this female dress which
I have stolen from the temple of the dancing goddess.
I have got a foot-trinket too.

*Viroopaksha wears the female costume and
ties the foot-trinket in his legs.*

*As he reaches the pigsty he willfully makes
the trinket sound heard.*

*Jabala and rasikamani, the guards are
aroused.*

They look at each other.

Gavaksha hides behind the pigsty.

*Son of man and friends follow the thieves at
a distance.*

*Viroopaksha walks towards the forest in
female costume passing the two guards.*

Jabala My mind and body want to go after the woman. But
my fear and reason compel me to sit where I am.

Rasikamani Human body is for the service of others. I have
decided to serve this lonely lady with my body.

Jabala No venture please for no danger.

Rasikamani I am accompanying her for keeping her out of danger.

Rasikamani follows viroopaksha.

*Viroopaksha hangs his female dress on some
shrubs at a bush.*

Viroopaksha hides near a tree as he sees rasikamani approaching the bush.

Rasikamani speaks to the hanging clothe on the shrub.

Rasikamani Dear lass, can I help you this night? Why do you keep silence? Shy girl! It will be dawn soon.

Viroopaksha sneakingly extends his hands to rasikamani's clothes and undresses him.

Rasikamani The thorn has timely undressed me. Let it rest there for a while. Good girl, you should not get bewildered. I am coming to your rescue. I know that your silence is your consent.

As rasikamani moves towards the shrubs, viroopaksha wears the dress of rasikamani and returns back to the pigsty.

Gavaksha meets him in the darkness and tells him.

Gavaksha It is my turn now. I must keep the other guard away.

Gavaksha imitates the howling of a wolf.

Echoes hear.

Some distant wolves reply.

Jabala One or two wolves can do nothing against twenty pigs. But I am all alone. I had better be in the company of my lucky senior.

Rasikamani finds that the woman is missing in the shrub.

When he returns back he sees that his dress also is missing.

So he dresses in female attire.

Gavaksha and viroopaksha kill a pig and drag it away to tie it in the stick and carry it towards the bank of the river.

Son of man and his friends reach the pigsty.

Charuvela Padmini, wait for us. We are after those thieves.

They follow the thieves.

Rasikamani approaches the pigsty in female attire.

He hides at a tree when he sees jabala coming in his direction.

Jabala passes him.

Rasikamani hurries towards the pigsty and padmini recognizes the dress.

Padmini Who is that? Isn't it Govasani?

Rasikamani So you are here? Merciless like all other women, to have me frightened. Anyway I am happy to see you again.

Padmini A male sound! Where is Govasani?

Rasikamani Govasani? Who is that?

Padmini You are wearing her dress.

Rasikamani I saw her running towards the bush there. I got her dress. But she disappeared into nowhere.

Padmini You are responsible for her life. You must find her. Govasani may need this dress. If you don't find her, you should return the dress to the people who shall wait for you at the rock formations on the other bank of the river.

Padmini walks towards the river to meet charuvela and son of man.

As she reaches the banks, she sees the thieves trying to escape with the pig.

Son of man and charuvela intervene.

The thieves hide at once into the darkness.

Padmini Where are the thieves?

Charuvela They are hiding somewhere.

Son of man It is time for us to leave.

Charuvela Hiding thieves, we are hiring your boat for the time being. If the boat is really yours you will get it back. The pig will be sent to its owner. Come to the caves at the rocks tomorrow.

Padmini Get in. First of all we shall return rahula's boat. He needs it early in the morning.

Charuvela Can I ever disobey any of your orders?

SCENE 106

Venue *Dimitri's shop.*

Son of man and charuvela carry the dead pig to dimitri's shop. Dimitri is upset by the sight.

Dimitri No. No. We don't buy pigs.

Son of man We want you to sell us this pig instead.

Dimitri Sell you your own pig?

Charuvela We stopped two thieves while trying to escape with a stolen pig. It is yours.

Dimitri Well. But my guards did not report me such an incident.

Charuvela They have been fooled. They still do not know that the pig is gone.

Dimitri Five silvers is my usual rate. You can take the pig for three.

Charuvela You are generous. We don't have any money now. Can you give us one month time to pay you the money?

Dimitri No way. Give me my pig.

Son of man The pig will simply get rotten.

- Dimitri** Instant payment is my policy. However I may do you a favour. Can both of you work for me for a month for the exchange of this pig.
- Son of man** Provided you give us sufficient food to support us.
- Dimitri** Agreed.
- Charuvela** Then we are your servants.
- Dimitri** You shall look after my pigs replacing jabala and rasikamani.
- Charuvela** Thus we ensure steady supply of fire.

SCENE 107

Venue *The bamboo groves.*

*Kuanyin plays a melodious note in her flute.
She is standing under the shade of a tree.
Sivamangala, karmadeepika and young
champa sit at near by shades hearing it.
There is a natural wheat field aside.
A rill supplies water to the field.
Cows gather around kuanyin.
Doves sit on her shoulders.
Storks meditate at her feet.
The peaceful atmosphere is uninterrupted.
The wind is very mild.
Sivamangala closes her eyes to be thrown
into a horrible dream.*

SCENE 108

Venue Sivamangala's dream.

Soldiers burn twenty captive men alive.

*Amidst their cries she sees a beautiful face
turning horribly black.*

The lament of women is loud.

*Overwhelming all these sounds the voice of
a forty years old captive is heard.*

He is burning in the fire.

Man Lament my children, because you will be consoled.
The war shall cease and the invaders will leave the
land defeated. Our own children shall inherit this
paternal land.

The soldiers laugh loudly.

Soldier You are the last men of vinashtapura. How can you
have your own children?

*Above the laughter of the soldiers the last
words of the man are spoken.*

Man Those stones shall be turned into our children by our
almighty God.

The men die burning alive.

*The laments break out one after another like
great oceanic waves.*

SCENE 109

Venue The bamboo groves.

Champa approaches sivamangala.

Champa Are you sleeping, mother?

Sivamangala I was dreaming your father.

Champa What did he tell, mother?

Sivamangala That your children shall inherit this land.

Champa I am a nun. I shall have no children.

Sivamangala No, champa. We shall never disgrace you with austerity or chastity. You shall be married to a worthy prince. But will ever a worthy prince come to this lost land?

Champa Our new head of monastery is a king himself.

Sivamangala Then we shall give you in marriage to him.

Champa Heads of monasteries never marry.

Sivamangala Kings do. No man can help loving you, champa.

Champa smiles as aksa enters.

Aksa Govasani is missing. Master antharyami is convening an urgent meeting this evening. He conveys his desire to ensure the presence of kuanyin there.

SCENE 110

Venue The monastery.

Antharyami presides over a meeting of the women of vinashtapura.

Kuanyin occupies a prominent seat.

Kuttini The mysterious disappearance of our two nice girls is a matter of great concern. We must trace them out somehow.

Antharyami Have they run away with their possible lovers?

Karmadeepika Are we that much lucky!

Kuttini We are unlucky to lose girls day by day. You may be missing the next day. God alone knows whether anybody more has already missed this day.

Karmadeepika Aksa is nowhere here.

Antharyami Aksa is under my orders to look after vilasavathy. She is facing peaceful death.

Kuttini What is kuanyin's opinion?

Kuanyin We ought to have noticed that earlier. I would rather look after vilasavathy than looking for the gone girls.

Antharyami Then do what you wish for my sake. We shall evolve a resolution.

Kuanyin I am leaving at once to do my assigned duty. Come, karmadeepika. I have an instruction to give you. Sivamangala will attend the meeting.

Kuanyin walks out with dignity followed by karmadeepika.

They approach the river bank.

Kuanyin You know well that we are secretly growing wheat. The season is a bit dry these days. You must ensure that they get sufficient water. I won't be able to come back at least for a week. When I return I must see the plants intact.

Karmadeepika I shall keep them healthy.

Kuanyin Then go at once to our farm.

SCENE 111

Venue *The village.*

Aksa and kuanyin look after vilasavathy.

Her closed eyes move swiftly.

Vilasavathy has lost her senses and is speaking meaningless words.

Vilasavathy elongated ears... takshasila..... father was smile..... fire lust..... my child..... water... dark light..... I don't believe.... never.... ever.

Aksa Are you thirsty?

Vilasavathy the deeper.....

Aksa Do you want water?

Vilasavathy it is not a sin....

Kuanyin Wet her lips.

Aksa does so.

Vilasavathy sweet lips....

Vilasavathy sleeps peacefully.

Aksa She won't be more.

Kuanyin Well.

Aksa What are you thinking about?

Kuanyin Of plants requiring water. They also live and die like vilasavathy.

Aksa Karmadeepika will look after them.

Kuanyin She must be nursing the plants now.

*Vilasavathy is having difficulty in breathing.
The women are striving to make her normal.*

Vilasavathy uma....pa....they....

Vilasavathy is completely unconscious.

SCENE 112

Venue *The bamboo groves.*

Karmadeepika is sitting under a tree looking at the farm.

The crops in the farm are half grown.

Her looks reveal the mannerism of a lover.

Karmadeepika Padmini must have a lover, to be sure. They may be living in varunatheerttha or in purushapura.

Karmadeepika picks some wheat from a basket and throws them to the doves.

They eat from her hands and even her basket.

Their sounds are sweet to her.

Karmadeepika Doves always have their mates near them. I simply love to see them in the dusk. I even like to sing in the lonely night a song about a pair of doves.

Karmadeepika sings a song and moves around like a butterfly.

She abruptly stops singing when she hears a familiar sound.

Govasani is standing in front of her.

Govasani Are you in love?

Karmadeepika Are you alive, govasani?

Govasani Can't you see me?

Karmadeepika I can't believe it.

Govasani I too cannot believe seeing you dancing.

Karmadeepika I do not know. Ever since you are missing, I am behaving like this.

Govasani Is it?

Karmadeepika But tell me whether you have a lover.

Govasani Padmini and I are married to two good men.

Karmadeepika How did you find your man?

Govasani The man I got the night that I left you was very cruel and did hurt me in many ways. He tortured me until morning and even stole my dress leaving me naked. It was so horrible that I felt unconscious for a while and woke up only after some hours. I felt shy sad and fearful. So I went to the rocks to hide myself until the arrival of some of my friends. To my wonder I found a man waiting there for me with my lost dress. I received my dress with gratitude and asked him to wait there. When I dressed up in my best I found padmini as well there with two unknown men. Padmini asked the man if he would marry me. He consented and we were united by solemn oath before a noble young man named, oh, I didn't ask his name.

Karmadeepika Was it padmini's husband?

Govasani No. His name is Charuvela.

Karmadeepika Are there many men?

Govasani There are many men now among them and some of them are not married. A nice carpenter among them named thakshaka is a perfect match for you.

Karmadeepika Don't you know that I am a nun?

Govasani Yes. I also know that I was a worthless prostitute.

Karmadeepika But I have an oath never to marry.

Govasani No. I think that your vow is never to yield to adultery.

Karmadeepika I am totally confused.

Govasani I also was confused when they told us their plans to bring back the lost past of vinashtapura.

Karmadeepika What is it?

Govasani It is a plan of the married people. If you marry thakshaka you will be a partner of the secret as well. But I dare say that it is a plan to cultivate the entire vinashtapura.

Karmadeepika I want some time to make a decision.

SCENE 113

Venue *The residence of kuanyin.*

*Karmadeepika is lost in deep thought.
Champa views her with curiosity.*

She thinks that karmadeepika is sick.

Champa Please tell me mother whether you are sick.

Karmadeepika Leave me alone champa.

Champa Mother kuanyin may be displeased with us if our wheat farm is not properly nursed.

Karmadeepika What will she do? She may perhaps exile me. I don't fear her.

Champa Please do not tell unpleasant words mother.

Karmadeepika Why should you worry girl? Who is going to care about this little farm when vinashtapura is going to be fully cultivated with wheat?

Champa Who is cultivating here mother other than us?

Karmadeepika I am. I have decided it.

Champa Don't you know mother, the great story of our farm?

Karmadeepika Great master during his last visit gave kuanyin a small bag of wheat that was just sufficient to make five loaves of bread. She cultivated it again and again multiplying it sufficient for five thousand. But remember that neither she nor any other has tasted a single grain from it yet. She is waiting for his promised son's arrival to make her first loaf. Do you ever think that she will get a son in her life time? No. Never. She has committed such cruelties.

Champa But remember mother that all wheat is sowed except an original bagful of wheat. If the plants are not properly looked after, the efforts of the last few years will be lost forever.

Karmadeepika I am not doing anything. You may tell your kuanyin mother whatever you think fit.

Champa That is what I am exactly planning to do.

SCENE 114

Venue The village.

Champa meets rudrani outside vilasavathy's hut.

Champa Greetings, my mother.

Rudrani Greetings, my dear.

Champa I must meet mother kuanyin at once. It is urgent.

Rudrani goes in.

Champa looks affectionately at a wild flower and appreciates it.

Kuanyin comes out.

Champa Mother, how is mother vilasavathy?

Kuanyin She is having frequent fits. What emergency brings you here champa?

Champa Mother karmadeepika is lost in deep thought and do not perform her duties as she used to be. She only cares beautiful flowering trees. The wheat in the farm is almost dry for want of water and attention.

Kuanyin Do you mean that both the farm and the farmer need immediate attention?

Champa Exactly, mother.

Kuanyin speaks in loud voice.

Kuanyin Aksa, aksa.

Aksa enters from within.

Kuanyin I must leave at once to attend to some urgent works. You must take care of vilasavathy until my arrival.

Aksa I shall send you word if it is really necessary.

SCENE 115

Venue *The farm.*

Kuanyin is trying to lift the rill water to the farm with the help of sivamangala and champa.

They give up the work at last.

Champa I am tired, mother.

Kuanyin You may go. Let me sit here some more time.

Champa We may sit with you.

Kuanyin Take rest so that we may work the next day as well.

Champa and sivamangala leave.

Kuanyin is all alone.

Kuanyin plays a melancholy note in her flute at night.

She sees karmadeepika walking towards her.

Kuanyin Are you all right, karmadeepika?

Karmadeepika I am thinking about a marriage.

Kuanyin Well. Are you leaving vinashtapura?

Karmadeepika Not exactly. I shall be around here.

Kuanyin Yet you are not mad too?

Karmadeepika I am perfectly sane. I met govasani recently. She and padmini are married to two men. Some men are camping here with a plan to settle here marrying our women. I have a proposal that I have an inclination to give consent to.

Kuanyin You have then every right to be thoughtful. But is it a reason to neglect our farm?

Karmadeepika Our farm work will be meaningless when they start their intensive cultivation. I have to join them.

Kuanyin You have a free will.

Karmadeepika In that case I am leaving you at once.

Karmadeepika goes away.

Kuanyin The words of great master shall never be meaningless.
He said that my promised son would take over my farm.

*She looks at the sticks she had put across
the rill to lift the level of the water.*

The water level is diminishing.

*Kuanyin walks upstream and finds out that
a man is working hard to make a weir across
the rill.*

The work is almost finished.

*The water is flowing sufficiently through her
farm.*

Kuanyin Let me see him closely. He must be my promised son. Is it possible that he may have some connection with the missing girls?

The doves surround her.

She feeds them.

And starts playing a melody.

SCENE 116

Venue *The camp.*

Kuttini speaks with vasanthasena.

Vasanthasena is rolling some cotton for fire.

Kuttini Master has directed me to visit vilasavathy tomorrow. But I am worried about the girls. There must be external influence behind their disappearance. I suspect the other poor young man who couldn't get their company on the day of his arrival. Padmini was gone the same night. Some girls say that they have seen him working for dimitri.

Vasanthasena I found him around the temple the next morning. He was alone.

Kuttini She might be bound.

Vasanthasena But remember that he came directly to meet master antharyami.

Kuttini I know that they had a quarrel. The master was badly affected by his words. Hark. Don't you hear a voice outside?

***Kuttini looks outside.
She cannot find anything.***

Kuttini My sight is bad. Can you have a look outside?

Vasanthasena Have you no fear that I may also be lost?

Kuttini No my girl. You are worthier.

***Vasanthasena goes out and finds some men
and women picking up iron pieces from the
premises.***

Vasanthasena Who are you?

Padmini It is me, vasanthasena.

Vasanthasena Me?

Charuvela No more words. Let us go away.

*As they steal away vasanthasena identifies
padmini and son of man among the group.
She comes back.*

Kuttini Did you find anything?

Vasanthasena Nothing unexpected.

Kuttini But I am worried that somebody is cleaning the premises by picking away the iron waste spread around here.

Vasanthasena Is it not good news? After all she is not dead.

Kuttini What?

Vasanthasena Nothing.

SCENE 117

Venue *The caves.*

*Charuvela is forging agricultural utensils.
Padmini cooks food for them all.
But there is not plenty.*

She serves food to all except charuvela and son of man.

Padmini Are you sure that you will get the food from the pigsty?

Charuvela hammers an iron piece saying.

Charuvela No need to worry, dear. Son of man is in good terms with me as well as the pigs.

Padmini Great joke.

*Charuvela smiles sadly at son of man.
He smiles back at him too.*

SCENE 118

Venue *The village.*

Kuttini arrives with vasanthasena to visit vilasavathy.

Vasanthasena is greeted by aksa.

Kuttini expresses her displeasure towards aksa.

Kuttini Don't be friendly with her. She is happy when our girls are deserting us all. Let a thunderbolt befall on those who have betrayed them.

Aksa You have no reason to be angry with me.

Kuttini Why? We are losing our younger blood. Nobody needs old flesh. We all will be denied our daily bread if younger girls do not show some boldness. Aksa, you have been trained by me in the arts of lovemaking. But you want to be a physician. You must admit that you may be both the same time.

Vasanthasena Why do you compel her?

Kuttini Will you then entertain the pilgrims?

Vasanthasena Impossible.

Kuttini Our women complain that men are becoming wilder with the mature women. They even create scenes at the monastery.

Aksa Your attempt to persuade us is a useless waste of time.

*Kuttini returns back feeling insulted.
As aksa and vasanthasena enter the hut they
see vilasavathy lying still.*

Aksa She did not even ask a word about vilasavathy.

Vasanthasena She is so worried. Our income has diminished considerably.

Aksa You are right. She is doing all these things for our best benefit.

They hear the voice of padmini outside.

Vasanthasena Come in padmini.

Son of man and padmini enter.

Padmini He is a good physician. He will take care of her.

Son of man Let me see the patient. Would you all wait a few minutes outside?

Padmini He is really good. Come let us go outside.

The three intimate women speak.

Vasanthasena Have you got any idea about karmadeepika?

Padmini She is very peculiar. She says that she wants to marry thakshaka only after our area of cultivation exceeds that of kuanyin. They are working hard to make farming tools.

Aksa Have you seen my medicinal garden? I will show you that.

The women walk towards the garden.

The hut is mystic.

Rudrani comes from a far off corner of the village.

She stops at the hut.

She hears a masculine voice from within.

Voice It is not a sin at all. Even if it is a sin I am empowered to forgive you forever. Come, hold my hands and rise up.

Rudrani wonders but does not dare to enter into the hut.

When she goes away she sees the three women at a distance.

Padmini leads the other two towards the hut.

Padmini We are shaping two farmlands at both sides of the river. Our men have decided to tame wild bulls to work for us.

Vasanthasena Are you looking for more recruits to your society?

Padmini We need many more but not exactly now, because we do not have sufficient food at present.

As they approach the hut they see vilasavathy walking with the help of son of man.

They run towards them.

Vilasavathy I feel better. Tell the master.

Aksa Is he not really working at dimitri's pigsty?

Vasanthasena True.

Son of man Where can I get some shrubs?

Aksa My garden is open for you. Come with me.

They wander and collect the life giving medicine from neglected shrubs.

SCENE 119

Venue *The Pigsty.*

*Son of man and charuvela are preparing
food for the pigs from roots and corns.*

Charuvela Poor pigs! They will hunger when we feed our folk.

Son of man We may find more natural food for them.

Charuvela Look. This root seems nice. Let us keep this for our
women.

Son of man And these grains are not damaged too.

Charuvela I would prefer this piece as my breakfast.

Son of man No. Half of it is my share.

*Son of man and charuvela have their
breakfast peacefully.*

Charuvela The food of the pigs is not that much bad.

Son of man Especially when we have an option to select.

*They munch their food.
The pigs look at them.*

Son of man Don't worry. Here is your share.

He feeds them as well.

Pigs show pleasure and gratitude.

Son of man See charuvela, how thankful they are to the one who gives them their daily bread. I learn this lesson from these pigs.

Charuvela Do you mean that you are thankful to dimitri?

Son of man More than that. To the one that gives everybody his respective daily bread.

Charuvela God?

Son of man May be means may not be.

Charuvela And may not be means may be.

Son of man Yes. Anybody may be or may not be the giver. Yet there is a giver and the praise goes to him and only unto him.

Charuvela Let us pack today's food. Viroopaksha has arrived.

They pack the food items and hand them over to viroopaksha.

Viroopaksha A mouthful for me to chew.

Charuvela Take them out from the pigs' pots.

Viroopaksha It is dirty there.

Charuvela Then take this.

Charuvela gives him some grains.

Viroopaksha I know that you love me.

Charuvela Get going. It is time for us to free the pigs. Hurry.

Viroopaksha has a head load of stuff to carry.

SCENE 120

Venue *The old farmland near the forest.*

*The pigs are playing in the mud.
The sound of a tiger is heard in the forest.
The pigs start running towards the river.
The two men control and calm the pigs.
As they come back charuvela runs ahead of
the pigs and mimics the sound of the tiger.
The pigs run again towards the river.
Charuvela is happy to have found a way to
threaten the pigs.
Son of man intervenes.*

Son of man No. The river may claim their lives.

Charuvela I may let them free if you let us start the weir work early tonight.

Son of man Done. But I shall be with the wild bulls at that time. The cows have an affinity towards men. But the bulls here are very fierce.

SCENE 121

Venue *A river bank at the village.*

*Aksa sees the boats with men and women
returning after their work from the weir.
She follows them through the land.
As aksa approaches them son of man's boat
comes near her.*

Aksa Vilasavathy wants to meet you again.

Son of man I shall come in the afternoon.

Aksa I shall wait for you at the monastery.

She looks at the boats going with the women.

SCENE 122

Venue *The monastery.*

*Men from varunatheerttha merrily land at
the monastery and are received by the women
of vinashtapura.
But they don't see many beautiful young
women among them.
Leader of the group of men is infuriated.*

Leader We want young blood. Don't you hear. Young! I said
young women.

The women surround him.

Leader These two girls are average. The rest of them are fat or skinny nannies. Leave them.

He sees vasanthasena there.

Leader This girl is fit for me. Come lass! Is she a lass? No way. But I am content with her.

Vasanthasena keeps back and tries to go into the monastery.

Leader is in a mood to follow her.

Kuttini It is not allowed inside. You may go to the temple of the goddess.

Leader Then let her come with me.

Vasanthasena Leave me alone. Be happy with somebody else.

Leader I will be unhappy without you.

He holds her hand and drags her.

Antharyami enters and shouts.

Antharyami Leave her alone. She is my girl.

Leader Neglect the blind old man.

He attempts to drag her into the monastery.

Vasanthasena extends her hands to kuttini and others, but they do not react at all.

*Aksa frantically enters the monastery chased
by a man and takes a deep breath.
But she decides to save vasanthasena instead.*

Aksa Leave her. I am younger.

Leader Eh?

Aksa And more beautiful too.

Leader That is a lie.

Aksa looks at him in a lustful way.

Aksa Am I ugly?

Leader No. You are beautiful.

Aksa Then come to me.

*He frees vasanthaseva and approaches aksa.
Aksa slaps on his cheek.
The second blow is from son of man with a
thorny stick.
Son of man attacks mercilessly the visitors
shouting.*

Son of man Are you making this holy shrine of my father a den
for prostitution?

Antharyami Who claims this monastery established by emperor
asoka as his father's shrine?

Kuttini The same young prodigal who stole all your girls.
Shall anybody dare to visit us any more? We will all
starve. He must be stoned at the first opportunity.

*Son of man gets hold of aksa's hand and
walks towards the village.*

*Vasanthasena is left alone with her thoughts.
She murmurs.*

Vasanthasena He saved aksa. But all whom I loved neglected me.

SCENE 123

Venue *The village.*

*Vilasavathy welcomes son of man and aksa
into the hut.*

Vilasavathy I have recovered. I wanted to show my gratitude.
So I sent her to you. Do not sit there. I have a special
seat for you.

*Vilasavathy takes out a tiger leather seat to
offer him to sit on.*

Vilasavathy Only the heads of this monastery have used this seat.
I wish if you were one. Do not hesitate. You are
worthy for that. I have heard what you have done to
our girls. God bless you for that.

*Son of man sits on the tiger leather seat in
lotus posture.*

Vilasavathy You are sitting just like our masters. Let me offer you some honey collected in bull leather.

Son of man drinks the honey offered by vilasavathy.

Son of man I am delighted at your hospitality. I have some urgent affairs to attend to.

Vilasavathy You are free to go.

As son of man passes aksa, she exclaims.

Aksa You have that nasty smell of a tiger now. No animal will think that you are not a tiger until it recognizes you.

SCENE 124

Venue *The forest with wild bulls.*

Son of man is attempting to tame a bull.

But it runs away from him.

He tries another bull.

No use.

Even cows keep away from him.

He jumps over a bull.

It runs uncontrollably towards the riverbank with him on its back.

Finally the bull shakes him off.

Women on the other side of the bank see him get wounded.

*They run towards him.
Kuttini follows them shouting.*

Kuttini Stone him. Kill him.

Kuttini throws stones at him followed by others.

They even manhandle him.

Padmini and karmadeepika come for his rescue.

Only to be beaten aside.

Champa runs into the tragic scene.

She could not help screaming.

Champa Stop.

They stop stoning him.

Kuttini Leave here at once champa.

Champa Leave this man alone.

Kuttini He is a sinner. He has stolen the chastity of our women and has committed adultery with them.

Champa Let the one with chastity throw him the first stone.

One by one everybody puts down her stone.

Vasanthasena picks up a stone put aside by a woman near her.

She makes her heart another stone ready to stone son of man.

Champa No. Mother, I know that you had an affinity in mind towards one of our men who were burnt alive along with my father.

Vasanthasena weeps and puts down the stone.

They all disperse except vasanthasena and champa.

Vasanthasena You are a real princess. I wish if your king were here to see you now.

Champa Leave us alone mother. I have to take him to our home.

Vasanthasena I may help you.

Champa In that case inform mother kuanyin to arrange a bed for the wounded man.

*Vasanthasena hurries away to meet kuanyin.
Champa addresses son of man.*

Champa Are you a king?

Son of man weeps.

Champa Tell me only the truth. Are you son of man?

Son of man You are the first person in vinashtapura to ask my name.

Champa Then show mercy to your subjects. Mother has expressed her doubt that you are son of man. She seldom makes a mistake.

Son of man She is right.

Champa helps him to stand up and allows him to rest on her shoulder.

Champa I have imagined myself as your wife.

*Champa laughs.
Son of man weeps again and falls down in his knees at her feet.*

Champa Do not weep. We know that you never do evil. Mother will receive and nurse you.

Son of man Let me wash your feet with my tears.

Champa No. Kiss me with your lips on my forehead.

*She helps him to stand up again.
They walk slowly towards their destination.*

SCENE 125

Venue *An inner chamber of kuanyin's residence.*

*Son of man is resting in his bed.
Kuanyin is telling him her story.*

Kuanyin My son, I was the only daughter of a chinese king. When I became a worthy princess of eighteen he asked me to marry a king. I asked why I should marry at all. He replied that a woman needed the help of a man at old age, periods of sickness and the time of death. So I decided to marry a hiking physician. But my father wanted me to be a queen. I resisted and we were exiled soon to this lost land. We lived here peacefully even in the middle of raging wars. But on an unfortunate day a notorious king's soldiers captured us. The king's only condition to free us was to see me performing a chinese dance. I was eight month pregnant at that time. However for saving the life of my husband, I danced as much as I could. The king wanted me to dance exerting my entire body. I pleaded before him for my baby. The king said that I must dance once more for his soldiers and sent us to them. I don't get words to describe the cruelty of those soldiers. I can't help weeping, my son. I had an abortion and my only baby lived only some hours. It was a boy. But before his death the soldiers had ensured the death of my husband. The very purpose of my marriage became meaningless. Still I hoped to live in peace. But they won't let me do so. My husband had taught me some lessons in medicine. So I converted myself into a poisonous girl. I tried to unite the abandoned women and turned them fatal. We concentrated our activities at the monastery with the help of antharyami. When the war was over I tried to organize some agricultural activities. Ignorance and inability to do hard labour ultimately proved it as a failure. Are you asleep, son of man? Sleep on my lap and see sweet dreams.

Son of man is dreaming.

SCENE 126

Venue The wilderness near a river.

Sound of wilderness with his staff starts his mission in his fatherland.

His camel leather clothes and forged sound make him look like a prophet.

Sound of wilderness Repent. I am the sound of the wilderness. The kingdom of god is nearing. Make the path of the one to come all right. All the hills shall be leveled and the trenches shall be filled. Repent.

Son of man appears before him in rags.

Son of man Yohana, I lost my anointment oil and destination. I refused the care and affection of my father and abandoned him to inherit vinashtapura. The merciless prostitutes there did not know that I was their master. I had to eat pigs' food and to sleep in the caves. Nobody even cared to ask my name. They stoned and tortured me instead. I know that my father has many homes owned by him. I may not see his face again. Had I been his slave, I would have been happier. I fear that I won't be able to take your path.

Sound of wilderness If not you, who will follow me?

*Son of man hugs sound of wilderness.
The staff and the rags touch each other.*

Son of man Yohana, I won't let your austerities to be a mockery.
If not today, I shall certainly follow you some day. I
shall return back to our fatherland.

They walk to the river where people rejoice.

SCENE 127

Venue *The inner chamber of kuanyin's residence.*

Son of man is still dreaming.

Son of man I shall inherit the path set alright by you and make
the life of those who travel through it meaningful.

Son of man's eyes are wet.

Kuanyin's fingers move softly over his hair.

Son of man wakes up still crying.

Kuanyin All weeping ends in smiles.

Son of man All smiles end in weeping.

Kuanyin Let us see. Great master has sent you a gift. He bought
it from a merchant from gandhara.

Kuanyin goes in to fetch the gift.

Son of man I have got a graceful mother too.

Kuanyin hands him over the gift box.

Son of man What is in it?

Kuanyin Guess.

Son of man I never have expressed a desire to get a present.

Kuanyin Something you do not have?

Son of man I am gifted with a worthy father and a merciful mother.

Kuanyin Anything lost?

Son of man I have no wealth to lose.

Kuanyin Then see it yourself.

*When he opens the box he rejoices to see his
lost bottle of anointment oil in it.
He laughs heartily.*

Son of man You were right mother.

Kuanyin What is it?

Son of man It is my lost way truth and life. Yohana, millions will
walk though the path set alright by you.

Sivamangala enters.

Sivamangala Master antharyami has a message for you.

Kuanyin Tell me.

Sivamangala Master antharyami informs that both of you are
summoned to face a trial on the charge of treason.

Kuanyin Let the trial tell who has committed treason.

SCENE 128

Venue *The monastery*

*All women of vinashtapura witness the trial.
Antharyami presides over.*

Antharyami In the circumstances I request that the accused may be examined and exiled on the charges of exerting undue influence on young women for the purpose of adultery and of fatally attacking our guests against son of man and on various charges including mass massacre of innocent children and giving shelter to son of man in her home against kuanyin.

Sivamangala All these charges against them are false.

Kuttini Let the accused speak.

Son of man What is your authority to judge us?

Antharyami Upon the authority of the head of the monastery.

Son of man The authority of the monastery is only spiritual. Have any of your predecessors exiled anybody from his country?

Antharyami You do not belong to vinashtapura.

Son of man And do you? Does your spirituality separate human beings in the name of nationality?

Antharyami No.

Kuttini It is injustice to use your wisdom against the interests of the poor and the illiterate like us.

Son of man If I do not show you the light of information even after knowing that you are ignorant my wisdom shall judge against my knowledge.

Vasanthasena Poverty and ignorance is not our sin.

Son of man True. It is the sin of the world around you. But as a person determining the future of the world, you also are responsible for that. So reform yourself as a newborn woman and lead a meaningful life.

Kuttini All our efforts for our existence will be meaningless if you are not exiled.

Kuanyin Have you decided to exile us?

A great applaud upholding a yes is heard.

Kuanyin Then we decide to leave vinashtapura forever. But give us audience for a few minutes. Have I not suffered as much as you have done? Have I not fought against the armed people barehanded? Have I not protected you from all possible harms? Remember that this noble girl vasanthasena was humiliated a few days ago before almost all of you. Did any of you protect her dignity? It was for the sake of the same girl, I cut off one leg of dimitri when she was dragged by him in my presence. Don't you remember that I

was waiting for our boat to accompany great master to kurukshethra? I cancelled my proposed journey to become a protector of the women children and the weak. Great master then consoled me and promised me that he would send me a son. I peacefully waited for him. I never thought about good or evil or of anything happening around me. I fed doves played flute and cultivated a bagful of wheat into a great farm. I had planned to reap it tomorrow and I shall reap it too because it is great master's gift. Now tell me whether the words of our great master shall ever become a falsehood. Never. He has sent me my son. Son of man. He is son of man. Behold the great king of visalapura whom you have stoned and tortured. He has received the gift of his father great master dharmabhadra from me and I declare that he be the head of this monastery established by great emperor asoka from this very moment. So kneel all of you before your new master.

They kneel.

Antharyami I know now son of man, the exact meaning of every words you once have spoken to me. I am beaten in spirit.

Vilasavathy No, my master, you are blessed.

Antharyami Let me declare that vilasavathy has been a spouse to me and I have begotten a daughter in her. But she is no more, kuanyin.

Antharyami is in tears.

- Kuanyin** I have repented years back. Kindly pardon me for the sake of all the children whom I have caused to kill.
- Antharyami** We all knew your intentions at that time. But sorrow is so deep that you cannot eliminate it.
- Kuanyin** I have experienced it.
- Son of man** Vinashtapura has been a land of sorrow. We have regained it as the new kingdom of heaven. I wish if all women here would marry and lead a loving life.
- Antharyami** Come son of man, and sit in the throne of the head of the monastery.
- Son of man** No. You are beaten in spirit. And you are blessed too. Yours is this kingdom of heaven. We are making arrangements to reap the wheat tomorrow morning. All women with men can reap from it. Padmini, ask all our men to assemble this evening to select their spouses.

They all laugh.

SCENE 129

Venue *The farm.*

All couples of vinashtapura have come to reap from kuanyin's wheat farm. Padmini and charuvela are giving instructions to others.

Govasani and rasikamani talk pleasantly while reaping.

Jabala assists rudrani.

Karmadeepika and thakshaka are standing aside hesitatingly.

Padmini Why don't you reap thakshaka?

Thakshaka She is still keeping her vow.

Padmini You can be an unmarried couple, karmadeepika, just like antharyami and vilasavathy.

Antharyami Who is mocking at us?

As they turn back they see antharyami and vilasavathy threshing.

Karmadeepika Didn't you get anybody vasanthasena?

Vasanthasena Two thieves were after me. Both of them wanted to marry me. How could I marry both?

Viroopaksha I have changed my decision. Aksa is with me.

Gavaksha Me too. Let vasanthasena marry somebody else. I have my sivamangala.

Antharyami Is there any man without a wife?

Charuvela Everybody has got a wife.

A bearded middle-aged man comes running towards them.

Man I am unmarried.

Padmini Who are you?

Man A man in need of a wife.

Padmini Ask the girl yourself.

Vasanthasena I hate this man.

Man I should complain to your head of monastery. Where is he?

Champa Master, there is a man with a complaint.

Son of man The decision is against you. Either champa or vasanthasena should marry him.

Vasanthasena Who is this man?

Son of man Master jnanadatha, the living last word in agricultural sciences. I have summoned him to assist us in our future ventures.

Champa Master, are you a king?

Jnanadatha I am not.

Champa Then I won't marry you.

Vasanthasena Since I have no choice, I may marry him if all of you compel.

Jnanadatha I don't want a woman who does not love me.

Vasanthasena Do not reject me, master. I want to reap this wheat.

Jnanadatha But I am a declared bachelor.

Vasanthasena The only bachelor allowed here is rahula. Come teach me how to reap.

Jnanadatha Son of man, when do you leave?

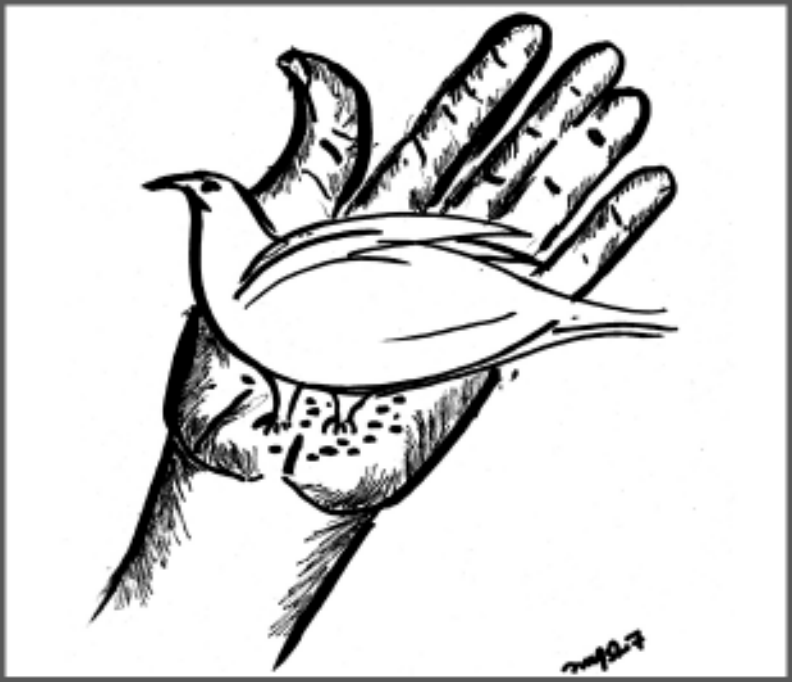
Son of man Early tomorrow morning. Do you know where my father is?

Jnanadatha He must be at purushapura now.

The attention of all the reapers are diverted to the commanding voice of Kuttini who is accompanied by one legged dimitri.

Kuttini Leave us our share of crops to be reaped. Dimitri has been helping to feed us all these days. Moreover he was my first man when I attempted to earn a livelihood to the women of vinashtapura. So I selected him as my husband.

Dimitri The lust for sex had conquered me for a while. I request all of you to pardon me accepting all my heirless wealth to the benefit of the people of vinashtapura.



SCENE 130 Purushapura, AD 20 December 30

Venue *A castle at purushapura.*

Pranithi, the ambassador declares the arrival of the guests in the court of the king kadphises .

Kadphises and his ministers occupy their respective seats.

A little boy sits in a portion of the kingly seat. His face shines with pride.

Pranithi The wise king son of man of visalapura, his mother kuanyin and princess champa enter.

*Son of man, kuanyin and champa are
received with great respect.
They are seated very near to the king.*

Kadphises Welcome son of man. Welcome kuanyin. I remember you seeing somewhere.

Kuanyin You have seen me during your raid at vinashtapura.

Kadphises A setback that I am trying to forget.

Kuanyin And a tragedy that I shall never forget.

Kadphises What do you mean?

Kuanyin You killed my son. But providence gifted me with an equally able son. My died son would have grown as big as your boy. What would you think if your pregnant wife had given birth to a dying piece of flesh instead of him?

Kadphises No more harsh words. I beg for your pardon. These are peaceful times of mercy.

Kuanyin Come, my son, what is your name?

Boy I am prince kanishka.

Kuanyin When you grow up and become the king what great decision will you take to rule this country?

Boy I shall gather wise men from all the four directions and convene a grand conference.

Kuanyin Then?

Boy I shall start a calendar.

Kuanyin You will be a great king. I imagine that you are my lost son. So let me advice you. Do not war. If you are forced to war, do it with minimum violence and bloodshed.

Boy You are talking too much to a prince. I have heard that you have made wonders. Here is a handful of rice. Do some magic with it.

Kuanyin I like to play with children. But I have played with only one boy. You are the second. Come, son of man. Stretch your both hands.

She puts some rice in his both hands and makes a pleasant sound.

Doves at the castle come flying towards them and eat from their hands.

Kuanyin Is it a miracle, kanishka?

Boy It is. How could you do that?

Kuanyin It is the miracle of peace.

Boy Then I shall play peace when I have free time.

Kadphises Come let us all feast.

They all follow the boy to the feast hall.

SCENE 131

Venue *The castle at purushapura.*

Pranithi meets indradatha outside the dining room.

Pranithi Welcome master.

Indradatha Can you pass some information, pranithi?

Pranithi With pleasure.

Indradatha Who are accompanying son of man?

Pranithi His mother kuanyin and princess champa.

Indradatha Who is champa?

Pranithi I do not know.

Indradatha Can I meet her?

Pranithi Possibly. She is coming out.

As champa comes out, indradatha greets her.

Indradatha Long live princess champa.

Champa My best wishes master.

Indradatha Do you belong to vinashtapura?

- Champa** We are practically exiled from there.
- Indradatha** Who is the head of monastery there?
- Champa** Master antharyami himself.
- Indradatha** What is your relationship with son of man?
- Champa** Master son of man and my mother mean everything to me.
- Indradatha** Where are you going?
- Champa** Master says that it is our kingdom of heaven wherever we dwell.
- Indradatha** Why did you come alone?
- Champa** Because I dislike too many things to eat. I have talked much. Let me go master.
- Indradatha** You are free to go princess.

Champa goes to the resting room.

- Indradatha** Thank you pranithi, I have enough information now. But if they ask the whereabouts of great master dharmabhadra, tell them that he has gone to takshasila.
- Pranithi** But master, I met him this morning.
- Indradatha** True. But he must have already left by now.

SCENE 132

Venue A farmhouse at purushapura.

Great master dharmabhadra is resting under a tree.

There is a river flowing at a distance.

Indradatha enters with a sad look.

Indradatha A bad news for you, master. Son of man has run away from vinashtapura with two women. They had come to this city. But no sooner did they get information about your presence here than they escaped to thakshasila. People have started asking me for conformation on the stories of their immoral activities. We had better return back at once to kurukshethra.

Dharmabhadra I have decided to leave here at once. Are you sure that we have lost son of man forever.

Indradatha Yes, my good master. I saw them myself.

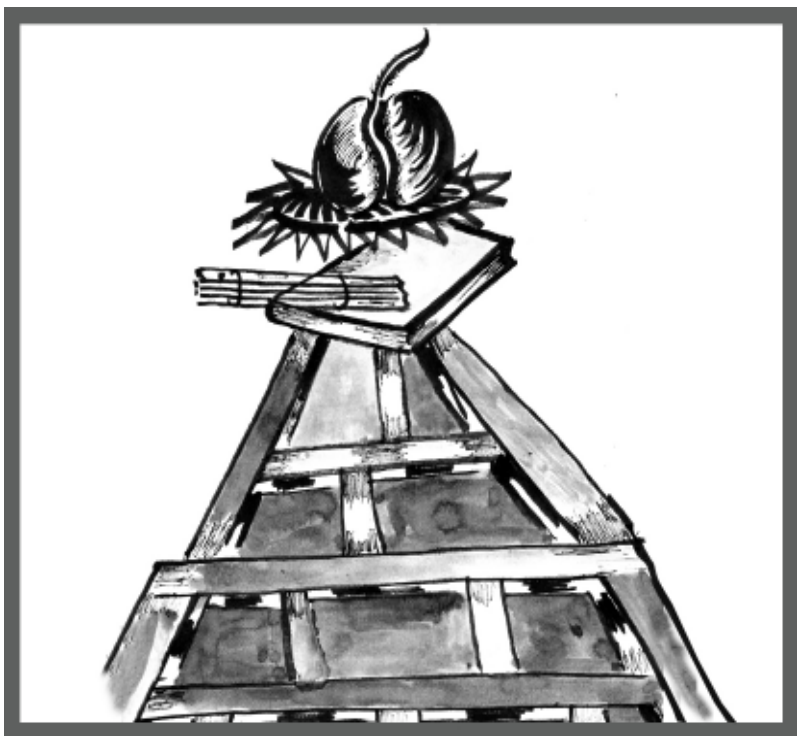
Dharmabhadra Did you hear their names?

Indradatha Yes. Kuanyin and Champa. The elderly woman is

Dharmabhadra No need to explain. Get ready for a journey to madraka.

Indradatha We have work at kurukshethra.

Dharmabhadra Sitting idle at madraka will do us more good.



SCENE 133 Thakshasila, AD 21 January 8

Venue The great university of takshasila.

A group of scholars discuss various philosophies with son of man.

Kuanyin and champa plant some trees.

They can see huge blocks of buildings decorated by paintings and sculptures.

Thousands of students and teachers move towards their destinations in the university. Musical chants of meaningful words are heard everywhere.

Every stone of takshasila has a story to tell.

A monk is instructing son of man.

Monk You will get hundreds of preceptors here, all of them being the best in their respective branches of knowledge.

Son of man I need no more preceptors.

Monk Have you learned everything in this young age?

Son of man I am blessed with the knowledge that if learned makes the learning of all other knowledge unnecessary. My father has taught me that lesson.

A preceptor prohibits the planting of trees undertaken by kuanyin.

Preceptor Trees will ruin the beautiful view of takshasila from the city.

Kuanyin All centres of knowledge are a target of destruction of organized criminals. If these centres are not properly protected all of them including takshasila will disappear in the run of time.

Son of man approaches them.

Son of man Let them grow their trees of knowledge and let us find our father to plant our trees of life.

Kuanyin Where will you find him?

Son of man No father will desert his son until he reaches his destination. We are traveling to the high lands through madraka.



SCENE 134 Madraka, AD 21 January 30

Venue The monastery at madraka.

Some monks talk in a hall in the monastery.

Mahabhahu Are you not invited to the feast hosted by the friend of the assistant of the royal priest's son?

Dinasurya Who cares to go to a place where meat and wine are offered to monks?

Mahabhahu Everybody eat meat. Even the enlightened one did. It is true that the earlier generations contemned flesh of all kinds on the ground that

every living being loves to be alive. But people know now that monks like the taste of meat. So all the rich people offer monks flesh and they pleasantly accept such food.

Dinasurya It is equally true that those who practice nonviolence never go a second time for alms where they are offered meat.

Mahabhahu All primates have a tendency to eat meat though at a less affinity than the animals of prey. So I am not ashamed to eat meat. I am invited to the feast along with master indradatha. He is the chief guest there.

Dinasurya He has told us many times that two monks should not receive alms from the same house the same day.

Mahabhahu But this is a feast. Nobody will blame monks even if they come crowded to bless the host of the feast.

Dinasurya I am not coming. I won't eat meat until it is served in the monastery itself.

Mahabhahu Who cares your principles! At least a dozen of the monks have planned to go to the feast only for the purpose of eating tasty meat. But great master is sitting at the entrance of the monastery expecting somebody. We will have to exit though the backdoors.

Indradatha enters.

He sees the cook hiding away from a closed door.

Indradatha Fools! The cook has been overhearing you. He will inform the fact at once to great master.

Mahabhahu Shall we depend upon backdoors, master?

Indradatha There is sufficient time to go. Let me know first who is visiting great master today.

SCENE 135

Venue The garden at the monastery.

Dharmabhadra sits in an armchair waiting for somebody in the shade of a huge tree.

Some monks feel difficulty because of his presence there.

He looks at far away things and finds two persons coming towards the monastery.

He sees a man and a woman merged in the beautiful landscape.

Dharmabhadra Where is the cook? We have guests. Let us have a feast today in their honour.

Cook With meat or without meat, my master?

Dharmabhadra I only meant vegetable feast.

Cook What the monks like is meat my master.

Dharmabhadra Do as I told you.

Mahabhahu Backdoor is the only solution.

Dharmabhadra receives ayushmathy and kaladhara with a smile.

Dharmabhadra Have you got any news of your friend?

Ayushmathy Nothing. But our time to start the journey to the destination has come and we hope that he will arrive soon.

Kaladhara You are right. Look, he is arriving.

They see son of man and two women descending the nearby hill.

Dharmabhadra runs like a boy to greet them.

His both guests follow him.

Dharmabhadra embraces son of man.

Indradatha also arrives at the scene.

Dharmabhadra I knew that you would come. I am happy. Let me see your face once more.

Son of man I have sinned against you and our heaven. Pardon me, merciful father and accept me as one of your slaves.

Dharmabhadra Kuanyin, why does our son say so? Rejoice all. I have regained my only son. Kill a fat calf. Let everybody eat meat unto his satisfaction. This shall be the greatest feast that we ever have enjoyed.

Indradatha Great master, I have been your chief disciple for years. I have never seen you killing any living being

for me or any other monk or for yourself. But now you have become liable for the life of an innocent calf on behalf of this prodigal so said son of yours who has ruined everything he had for the sake of hateful prostitutes.

Dharmabhadra Indradatha, you have always been with me. But this son of mine has been lost and now I have saved him back into life. Is this not a time for celebration?

Indradatha Is great master preaching righteousness on the same moment of sacrificing a life of an animal under his orders? I cannot stand this any more. I am leaving you. If I miss this feast, I have a greater feast waiting for me.

Indradatha leaves them through the front gate.

Dharmabhadra smiles.

Dharmabhadra Let us all get ready for the feast.

SCENE 136

Venue *The feast hall.*

Monks enjoy the feast with meat.

They are offered wine also.

Dharmabhadra, kuanyin, son of man, champa, ayushmathy and kaladhara arrive late and they occupy the seats reserved for them.

When dharmabhadra is offered meat he refuses it saying.

Dharmabhadra I won't eat the meat of the calf whose killing is ordered by me.

The serving monk moves to kuanyin.

Kuanyin I have killed many children and I have a vow not to partake in the death of any living being direct or indirect.

Son of man Since the meat is prepared in honour of me, I am forbidden to have it under the rules ordained by the enlightened one.

Champa I never do anything that my mother and my master refuse to do.

Ayushmathy Kaladhara and I have only followed the model of son of man.

Serving monk Serve them all vegetarian food.

***Some monks serve them food.
Before having their food dharmabhadra makes a declaration.***

Dharmabhadra I am going on a pilgrimage to the himalayas today itself. I won't be able to come back. Let me impart you my last message. Never be greedy. The downfall of the great association of the enlightened one has

already begun. So I declare that all the monasteries under kurukshethra headquarters will be free hereafter. Anybody may start a new association and anybody may abandon an association. Let free liberty be our principal policy and the enlightened middle path. If anybody has any doubt, you are free to ask questions.

***Dharmabhadra eats his food.
Ayushmathy asks him.***

Ayushmathy Where do we go first?

Dharmabhadra We? No group more than two members have ever achieved enlightenment in the himalayas in the same journey. I take kuan Yin for my company. You may select among yourselves.

***He goes on having his food peacefully.
Mahabhahu hears his great master's words.
He hurries towards the door.
Dharmabhadra calls him from behind.***

Dharmabhadra Are you going to pass the information to indradatha.

Mahabhahu nods.

Dharmabhadra Then go and do it at once.

Ayushmathy I see that your attitude towards indradatha is liberal.

Dharmabhadra He is ruthlessly after activity. Let him work peacefully until his few days are over.



**SCENE 137 Nagasaras of Kashmira,
AD 21 February 18**

Venue A wooden hut at the shore of nagasaras.

*Son of man sleeps deeply.
Champa is looking out in the moonlight.
The lake is very beautiful.
It is grand silence everywhere.
She sees a naked man walking over the lake.
As the man crosses the lake she sees stars
reflected in the lake.
Then she sees her mother and great master
walking over the lake hand in hand.
Then she sees the moon reflected in the lake.*

Then she sees a man and a woman crossing the lake.

As they walk over the lake she sees all the plants reflected in the lake.

Then she sees a monk walking over the lake and sinking at halfway.

As the monk sinks in the water she sees darkness covering everything.

She closes the window and goes to sleep in the darkness.

SCENE 138

Venue Nagasaras.

Son of man and champa come out prepared to cross the lake.

They see no man or woman there.

There are no boats available anywhere.

When they feel the water it is very cold.

They are convinced that they cannot easily cross the lake by swimming.

Son of man This is the third day we are here. We could not find a way to cross the lake yet.

Champa When the stars are reflected in the lake, I shall show you the way.

Son of man Tell me the way.

Champa thinks it over.

Champa I do not know how to tell it. If you come out in the night I will show you my way.

She smiles.

SCENE 139

Venue Nagasaras.

*Son of man is sleeping in the room.
Champa keeps looking at the lake.
The night brightens slowly.
When she sees the stars reflected in the lake,
she awakens him.*

Champa Wake up. The stars have come. Hurry.

*Son of man wakes up.
She gets hold of him and runs out to show
him the lake.*

Champa Look. Look at the stars reflected in the lake.

*Champa runs into the lake holding son of
man's hand in her hand.
They are running over the lake.
As they reach the other shore she turns and
sees the moon reflected in it.*

Champa Come. Let us go back to the other shore again.

She runs towards the wooden house.

*Son of man follows her.
As they reach the shore they see all the trees
reflected in the river.*

Champa Hurry. There is not enough time.

*She holds his hand and runs at maximum
speed.
As soon as they reach the other shore it gets
dark and son of man and champa gets wet
as deep as their waist.*

Champa The stars saved us.

Son of man No.

Champa May be the moon or the trees.

Son of man We were running over ice, champa, solid ice.

*Champa feels the settled ice.
She breaks a piece of it and looks through
the crystal clear ice to the sky.
Son of man takes another piece and throws
it into the middle of the lake.*

Champa I wished if I could see the stars through it.

Son of man I wondered if the lake was as deep as I thought it to be.

Champa squeezes her wet dress.



SCENE 140 Akshayacheena, AD 21 March 30

Venue A valley in akshayacheena.

A valley between two huge blocks of mountains.

A young rill flows through it.

Rocks and boulders hold up their surfaces above water level.

A group of tribesmen under the leadership of two wise men named yama and chitraguptha guard the valley so that no evil man will ever enter into the holy land.

Chitraguptha is sleeping.

Yama Wake up, chitraguptha.

Chitraguptha wakes up.

Yama Information has been received that the surface of nagasaras becomes solid during night.

Chitraguptha Why interrupt my sleep? You can prevent a dozen people without my help.

Yama Our duty is not only to restrict the entrance of evil people but also to promote the entrance of wise and good men.

Chitraguptha The selected men have to spend at least one month here until the climate is favourably changed for journeys to the holy lake.

Yama Our people have already arranged necessary conveniences.

Chitraguptha Then let us tell our people to show the travelers the way leading them to here. It will take some days for them to arrive here in this cold climate.

Yama But once we receive them, take care that the guests are kept in solitude until the roads are ready.

Chitraguptha Well. But let me sleep some more.

Yama I reserve the privilege of awakening you at any time.

Chitraguptha sleeps again.

SCENE 141

Venue The valley in akshayacheena.

Chitrugupta is sleeping in his room.

Yama Wake up. We have seven men in a row to interview.

Chitruguptha Well. If there is work, I never sleep. Let us go and sit in the chairs of our authority.

They sit in their official thrones.

Their people guard them and do not allow anybody to come near their leaders.

So the conversation is very loud.

Eternal flame of soul enters naked.

Yama shouts.

Yama The land beyond this is restricted area. Only those who give the correct answer to our questions are allowed to enter holy manasasarovara.

Chitruguptha Luckily you have many right answers for each difficult question.

Flame of soul If only a few persons are allowed to enter that holy place, I refuse to enter there.

Yama You are a holy man with a lot of sense of equality. You are welcome to our land.

Chitruguptha leads flame of soul into their village.

*It is a very simple and neat village.
When chitraguptha returns, he sees
ayushmathy and kaladhara there.*

Yama What do you fear?

Kaladhara I have no other cause of fear except you.

Ayushmathy I may fear anything except you.

Yama The man is very practical and the woman is fearless.

Chitraguptha We welcome both of you to our village.

*Chitraguptha leads them into another part
of the village.*

Ayushmathy When shall we meet all the others again?

Kaladhara When the time gets ripe.

*When chitraguptha comes back he sees
dharmabhadra and kuanyin and runs to
them to embrace dharmabhadra.*

Chitraguptha Welcome back, blessed one. We bow before you.

All the tribesmen show respect towards them.

Yama Welcome, blessed one. But devils even roam in the form of great masters. We cannot allow you to enter without being subjected to our test again.

Dharmabhadra Last time you asked me about birth. What are you asking me this time?

Yama Tell us what death is.

Dharmabhadra Life has been prevailing through millions of years without interruption through the transfer of itself into offsprings. Any life in the form of flesh thereafter or otherwise perishes and it is the death of the body. But the spirit survives forever through the transfer of itself into blissful words. Any uttering that is not blissful is the death of the spirit. But the spirit can resurrect anywhere on anybody and a person subjected to this phenomenon is known as spiritually reborn. They are blessed with blissful words.

Chitrakuptha What is your answer, woman?

Kuanyin I shall never die, wise men, for I am already resurrected.

Yama The blessed one proves unaffected by age. The grasping power of the woman is superb.

Chitrakuptha We are honoured to receive you into our village.

Chitrakuptha leads them into the best cottage in the village.

When he returns back he sees son of man and champa crossing the river through the rocks across it directly to pass into the village.

Chitrakuptha Stop there. You should take this route. We have got some questions to ask you.

Son of man climbs over a huge rock and shouts.

Son of man Ask your questions.

Yama What is your belief in god?

Son of man Don't your scriptures say that god is single and indivisible?

Chitrakuptha They do.

Son of man Don't they say that he is all merciful and just?

Chitrakuptha Yes.

Son of man Is it not written that god dwells in the hearts but not in the idols of wood or stone?

Chitrakuptha It is written.

Son of man Don't the scriptures say that he forgives to all and resists all evil?

Chitrakuptha Yes; a hundred times.

Son of man Don't you all know that you feel the presence of god through love consolation belief hope and other aspirations of humanity?

Chitrakuptha We do.

Son of man Then unto him my holy father I do believe.

Yama What is your belief, woman?

*Champa climbs the rock and holds the hand
of son of man.*

She raises their hands high up.

Champa See all men our hands held together. I am holding
the hand of my one and only god.

Yama You may go directly into the village and dwell
wherever you wish to live.

Chitrakuptha I have never seen people like them who are pure in
heart.

Yama We will let you know when the road to
manasasarovara is ready.

*Champa and son of man cross the river.
They enjoy the mist that hides them from
others.*

*They feel the great himalaya as their abode.
Glaciers above smile at them.
Champa asks son of man.*

Champa Do you love me, master?

Son of man My god is my love.



SCENE 142

**Manasasarovara, AD 21 The full moon day of
the enlightened one.**

*Venue A passage between two mountains that leads to
manasasarovara.*

*Many paths join there but leads only to
manasasarovara.*

*From various paths the selected seven
persons enter and walk silently one after
another towards manasasarovara with
perfect silence.*

*Even birds forget to sing in awe to the
grandeur of the beauty of the holy land.*

*They see swans swimming in the lake.
The purity of the water is very high.
All the icy mountains around are perfectly
reflected therein.
Even the calmest mind will feel a further ease
and peacefulness there.
Dharmabhadra addresses the others.*

Dharmabhadra Yamuna ganga sindhu and bhahmaputhra originate from this lake. They are the cultural and economical source of bharatavarsha. When the full moon gets reflected this night in manasarovara, the face of the enlightened one may appear in it. He may even talk to us. Thunderbolts and storms will shake the world then and the gods will open all the doors of the heaven to invite him to there and will shower flowers upon him.

*Son of man hands the bottle of anointment
oil over to champa and moves towards flame
of soul but turns back when he finds that he
is in meditation.*

*The dusk reveals one of the most beautiful
views humanity ever has witnessed.*

There is light even after sunset for hours.

*As the full moon shines they do not feel the
arrival of night.*

Swans as well do not sleep this night.

*When the midnight comes the image of the
full moon turns into the face of the
enlightened one.*

They hear the sounds of thunderbolt and storm.

The enlightened one speaks to them.

Voice Who wills to be bodhisattva?

Nobody answers.

Voice Is there any disciple willing to be bodhisattva?

Everyone answers a yes.

Voice Eternal flame of soul, will you be bodhisattva?

Flame of soul No. I have already suffered more than I can afford.
I am unable to suffer any more sorrows.

Voice Dharmabhadra is bodhisattva for twenty-four years.
One of you among five may be bodhisattva. I shall appear soon.

The face disappears and the full moon is seen reflected in the lake.

Silence surrounds them all.

Flame of soul breaks the silence.

Flame of soul Son of man, you owe me three coppers.

Son of man I have always kept it near my heart.

He takes out the three coppers and hands it over to flame of soul.

Flame of soul I sold my spirit for the exchange of three coppers. I must transfer you the book of bhadrabahu.

When son of man stands face to face with flame of soul the book of bhadrabahu gets transferred from the forehead of eternal flame of soul to son of man in the form of a blue light.

When the transfer is completed son of man weeps bitterly.

Son of man This is sheer sorrow. I can't endure this. Father, mother, help me. I cannot suffer this.

He cries loudly touching the inner soul of all those who hear him.

Champa comes forward and embraces him.

Champa Share me your sorrows.

She also is weeping.

She kisses him and pats him on his shoulder.

They hear the loud cry of flame of god.

Flame of soul The heat of the austerities I practiced burns me. Fruits of all my actions, come, and burn in this fire. I do not want to live again. I refuse to be born again. I am no more.

He burns himself into ashes.

Three coppers shine in the ashes.

Kuanyin Great master, what is it?

Dharmabhadra Kuanyin, it is not a happy experience to be bodhisattva. Being bodhisattva means being ready to suffer all the sorrows of this world. I have been suffering this for the last twenty four years. This time there are five persons to share the sorrows.

Champa Great master, I wish nothing except that is gifted by my mother and my master son of man. I shall be content if they allow me to share a part of their sorrows.

Dharmabhadra Your words will come true, my daughter. I plead kuanyin and son of man to return back to their respective homelands. Let kaladhara propagate the ideas of the enlightened one through various fine arts and ayushmathy work for the empowerment of women. I may not be able to go back. So come my disciples and embrace me.

Kuanyin embraces him.

Dharmabhadra Kuanyin will be known as the goddess of mercy in her homeland.

Ayushmathy embraces him.

Dharmabhadra You will be known as sakthi, the incarnation of all feminine power.

Kaladhara embraces him.

Dharmabhadra Your sculptures will remain for centuries.

Son of man embraces him.

Dharmabhadra My son, always remember that your father has sent you and that his spirit dwells within you.

Champa embraces him.

Dharmabhadra Daughter, This world is full of sorrows. Never let your heart lament. I wish if there were many good girls like you. Your face will resemble all the good princesses of all stories that shall ever be told by young people hereafter.

Champa weeps.

Dharmabhadra sits in lotus posture.

His four disciples also do so.

Dharmabhadra I am transferring my powers to you. I shall retain all my sorrows myself and shall take rebirth in due course.

Brightness surrounds dharmabhadra and four beams of power are transferred into the spirit of the four persons and each of them generates brightness around them.

Dharmabhadra's body loses the brightness around him.

They hear the sounds of storm and thunderbolt.

*As they look at the lake they see the face of
the enlightened one reflected in it.
They hear the voice again.*

Voice I know your wish. Each of you will be bodhisattva.

*Champa anoints them with the oil that son of
man has handed over to her.
The enchanting fragrance of the flowers
spread everywhere.
A mild wind passes them.
Champa moves towards dharmabhadra.
Kuanyin forbids her.*

Kuanyin His soul has left his body.

*They stand still for a minute in reverence.
Son of man prays.*

Son of man Our father who is in heaven, blessed be your name,
let your kingdom come, your will be fulfilled in this
world as in our heaven.

*They lift the body of dharmabhadra and
merge it in the lake indifferently.*

Ayushmathy Let us go back now.

Kaladhara You are always in a hurry. Let me meditate on your
future.

Kaladhara meditates.

He sees the smiling faces of numerous graceful women.

Kaladhara Though I see many women, you are not one among them.

Ayushmathy All of them are my own images. Now let me meditate on your future.

Ayushmathy meditates and sees numerous beautiful sculptures of the enlightened one.

Ayushmathy Though I see numerous sculptures, I do not see you among them.

Son of man They are all his sculptures. I am meditating on my mother.

Son of man meditates and sees kuanyin as a happy and merciful goddess.

She feeds doves and storks and plays flute in a bamboo grove with animals around her.

Son of man I saw you as a goddess.

Kuanyin closes her eyes and sees son of man nailed in two pieces of wood.

Kuanyin I see my son nailed.

Ayushmathy and kaladhara meditate.

Ayushmathy I see him wounded after being nailed.

Kaladhara I see him sacrificing his life in the cross.

Son of man Let us see the vision ourselves.

*Son of man and champa meditate.
Son of man sees himself coming out of the
cross in all might and holiness.*

Son of man I see me resurrecting from that wooden cross.

Champa sees him coming to her in all glory.

Champa I see my master in all glory like an angel coming to me.

*Each bodhisattva starts the journey to fulfill
their mission.*

*Ayushmathy leads them followed by
kaladhara son of man kuanyin and champa
respectively.*

*When they reach the mountain where the
roads diverge, champa sees kuanyin and son
of man taking different routes.*

Champa Stop.

They stop and turn back.

Champa I want to follow both my mother and my master.

Ayushmathy It is impossible, champa.

Champa If it is impossible I am going nowhere. I shall spend my life between the wooden house where we slept at the nagasaras and the manasasarovara. If anybody ever wants to see me, come back and console me at this grave of these two great men whom you have loved much. I shall wait for you either in flesh or in spirit. Son of man, my heart breaks when I depart you. I am a woman. Wear me a bindi please.

Son of man takes some ashes left over by his old friend jeevabindu and mixes it in his hand with the holy water of manasasarovara and wears a bindhi on her forehead.

He can't help embracing her.

She takes some of the ash paste in her hand.

Tears flow from her as if from the perennial manasasarovara and gets mixed in the paste.

She puts a bindhi on his forehead.

Champa Bodhisattva, come one day in flesh or in spirit to claim this soul waiting for you forever. That day I shall reclaim this bindhi from you. Until then keep this bindi in your flesh as you once have kept the three coppers to your heart.

When the bodhisattvas have gone for their mission, champa sits back at the mountain looking at the mystic manasasarovara unable to interpret it.

She only sees a female swan restlessly swimming with her chicks even in the calm waters of manasasarovara.



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